

AT THE GATE OF STRONGHOLD



by *H.S. Spalding S.J.*

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Two New York boys, sons of one of the detectives of the New York Police Department, go to the Dakota Bad Lands on their vacation. They spend it in a boys' camp with a group of lively American boys.

In such an atmosphere and with such boys things are bound to happen. The boys indulge in many an escapade and not a few thrilling adventures come their way.

One of the boys has a pronounced talent for detective work and due to his cleverness and grit, he discovers that the ranch of Stronghold actually belongs to his father, and he succeeds in seeing it restored to its rightful owner.

Cowboys, Indians, wild animal hunts, and clean American boyhood combine to make this one of the outstanding boys' books of the year.

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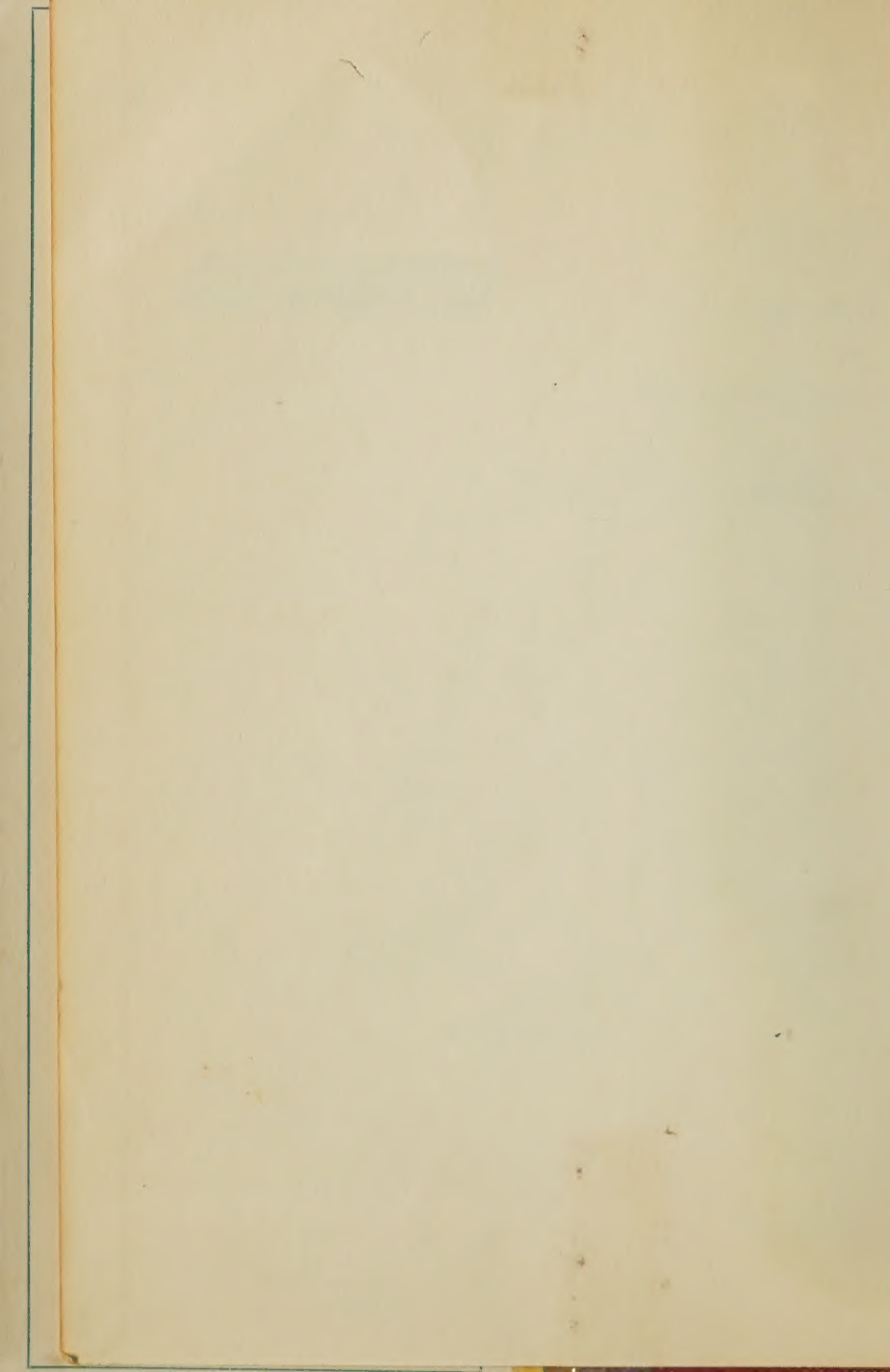
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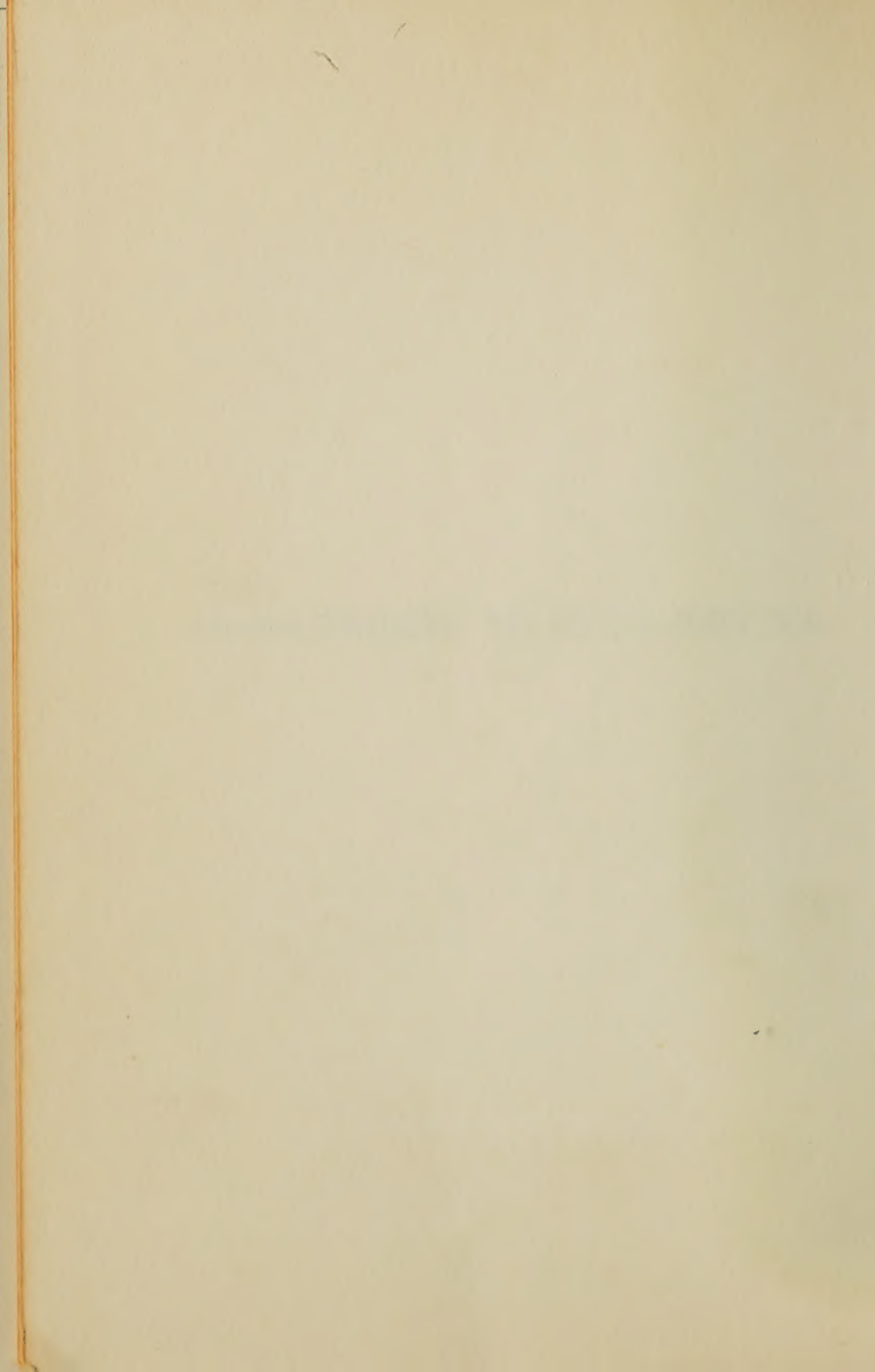
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~~BLESSED SACRAMENT SCHOOL~~
~~SOUTH CHARLESTON, W. VA.~~



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BY

HENRY S. SPALDING, S. J.

Author of "Signals from the Bay Tree," etc.



NEW YORK, BOSTON, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO, SAN FRANCISCO

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CHAPTER I

HOW THE WEST WON THE DAY

“**N**OW for your old Adirondacks! Adirondicks! Sticks on the Adirondicks! Look at this! President Coolidge is going to my place!” And young Vincent Terry thrust the *New York Sun* under the eyes of his brother.

Sergeant Terry had introduced something of the discipline of police headquarters into his household. Breakfast was at seven o'clock; and seven o'clock meant seven o'clock, and not five minutes or even three minutes after that hour.

To Vincent's outbursts of enthusiasm he replied rather curtly: “Son, you are late; sit down and eat your breakfast.”

“But I've got the best place for vacation!” insisted Vincent as he took his place at the table. “President Coolidge has got my place, too,” he added with some warmth.

“When did you and the President go into partnership?” quietly asked the mother.

"Well, he knows a good place, and he's picked the same place that I did."

In the meanwhile Vincent's older brother, Valentine, was scanning the headlines of the morning paper. "President Coolidge goes to the Black Hills for his vacation," he read aloud. "Will have his office in Rapid City, South Dakota, and will remain for two months at Hunters' Lodge, thirty miles away," he continued to read.

"Can't we go there for vacation, Pa?" asked Vincent.

"I've got a say about where we go," asserted Valentine.

"Yes, but I know you'll give in now," replied his brother. "You nearly gave in when I showed you that each boy had a pony to ride. And when you see the President is going, you won't want to miss it, will you?"

"The old Adirondacks look mighty good to me!" said Valentine.

"Oh, you want to go there because some rich boys go! The West is the place. No old Adirondacks for me! Sticks on the Adirondicks! That what I say! Sticks on the Adirondicks!"

"How far do you think the Black Hills are from here?" asked the father.

"They aren't much further than the Adirondacks," replied Vincent after some thinking.

"They are, too," put in Valentine. "They are twice as far, and I'm sure of that."

"Yes, they are twice as far," said the father.

"See there!" cried Valentine. "Didn't I tell you?"

"Yes, but you didn't tell him enough," explained the father. "The Black Hills are not only twice as far as the Adirondacks, but they are twenty times as far and may be forty times as far away. I was born in South Dakota, but I was brought to New York when I was one year old, so I don't remember the exact distance."

"I know some gogiffy," interrupted the youngest member of the family who was called Kitty Cotton. Now Kitty Cotton had amused the family a few days previous by asking why the priest walked down the aisle and sprinkled holy water on the people while the choir sang the asparagus. On the present occasion she volunteered the information that the world was divided into two hemstitches.

"You mean hemispheres," corrected the mother gently, while all the others laughed aloud.

“ Oh, yes; hemispares.”

“ No! hemispheres.”

After another unsuccessful attempt, little Kitty Cotton assured the others that she would have to wait until she was in the first grade before she could pronounce such a big word. At present she was only in the kindergarten.

Then there followed a general discussion of geographical matters. The father was prudent enough not to make many assertions, and he had enough general information to catch up the mistakes of the two boys.

When the subject drifted to the Yellowstone Park, he had his doubts about its distance from the Black Hills, but he knew that it was larger than Central Park, New York City. How much larger, he could not say.

Vincent held on to his estimate and claimed that Yellowstone Park could not be any larger than Central Park in New York City. Wasn't New York the biggest city in the world? and didn't it have the biggest things, and wouldn't it have the biggest park? The argument seemed convincing to him.

“ Well, you go out to South Dakota with President Coolidge, and I'll go to the Adirondacks with my friends,” said Valentine, “ and

when vacation is over we'll compare notes and see who had the better place."

"I didn't say I was going with the President," replied Vincent.

"You said you had the same place."

"But I didn't say I was going with him. He's going to South Dakota, and that's where I want to go."

"Do you know how much it will cost to make the trip?" the father wanted to know.

"Oh, about twenty-five dollars," was Vincent's careless answer.

"I'll double that amount. If you want to go, and are willing to walk the remaining distance, after the money is spent, you have my permission right now."

No one on the New York police force was better known or more liked than Sergeant Clifford Terry. He had not an enemy on duty. He had been able to save something from his salary, and had invested it in real estate, which by a stroke of good fortune brought him nearly a hundred thousand dollars. But there had been no change in the life of the sergeant, and he held on to his position of trust, and worked as faithfully as he had done when he needed the money to support

his family. One thing he determined to do, and that was to give his children an education; and as he lived in a very congested part of the city, he had previously sent the boys to the Adirondacks to the camp connected with the Catholic Summer School.

But there had appeared an announcement of a boys' camp in South Dakota, under the auspices of the Jesuits who had charge of the large Indian Mission among the Sioux Indians. One feature of this camp was that every boy would have his own Indian pony to ride during the two months of vacation.

It was the pony, more than any thing else, that captured Vincent Terry; and from the day that he read the announcement, there was a perpetual argument between the advocates of the Adirondacks and of South Dakota.

So far Vincent seemed to be the loser in the contest. He didn't know enough about South Dakota to argue in its favor, while Valentine could appeal to the clear waters of Lake Champlain, the mountain scenery, the fishing, the rowing, the swimming, the tennis, and the baseball.

But, when it was announced that the President was going to South Dakota, Vincent took

new courage; and when he pushed the morning paper under the eyes of his older brother, he felt that he had won his contention.

After the breakfast the brothers searched for old geographies and learned more about the middle west than they had been able to master during their eight years in the elementary school.

At meals there was only one topic of conversation—the Adirondack Mountains and the Black Hills. The Black Hills was a rather indeterminate territory. There was not much of a distinction in the minds of the boys between the Black Hills and the whole of South Dakota.

The announcement of the camp included a week's visit to the Black Hills, but the camp itself was to be located in another part of the state, known as the Bad Lands. The Bad Lands were referred to as a rough and picturesque part of the state, infested with rattlesnakes and inhabited by the Sioux Indians. Their very remoteness and vagueness added to their interest.

Sergeant Terry was rather inclined to the trip west, even though the cost would be greater than the camp in the New York moun-

tains. Somewhere among his private papers he had a deed to property in South Dakota, left him by his grandfather. He had the faintest recollection of an account which his grandfather had given him. There had been Indian wars, and stealing of horses and land, and the death of his grandmother, and the loss of a large tract of land in South Dakota. But it was all so long ago and so vague, that the sergeant could recall no connected account; nor had he even taken the interest to search for the locality in which the property was situated. He remembered that the place was a table-land or mesa, called Cuney Table, and that his father had more than once boasted that he owned the largest table in the world, for it was more than ten miles long.

However there was something in the word South Dakota that appealed to the sergeant. It was the state of his birth. Although he had left the country before he was old enough to remember anything about it, he felt inclined to have his two sons see the state and get some idea of the size of the country.

Before many days had passed it was decided that the two boys would spend their vacation in camp Red Cloud among the Bad Lands of South Dakota.

CHAPTER II

SADDLES FOR ALL

AS the school days drew to a close and the preparations for the departure of the two boys for the camp in South Dakota became more active, the long discussed trip to the West was the subject of conversation in the Terry home.

One evening on returning from police headquarters, Mr. Terry brought the information that his friend and associate, Sergeant Sarsfield Daly, had been ordered to South Dakota to direct the traffic in front of the President's summer home.

For nearly twenty years the two sergeants had worked together on the New York police force. Sergeant Terry was a small man and of slender stature; Sergeant Daly stood six feet three inches and weighed two hundred and thirty pounds. The latter was a blustering, talkative fellow; and yet in such a good-natured way, that he never gave offence. On the contrary he made friends wherever duty called

him. The former was quiet and retiring, and to any one who had not the opportunity to study him for a long time, he seemed to possess none of the qualities of a policeman, and much less of a sergeant of police. Still Terry had deservedly won his way and his promotion to his present position.

Sergeant Daly, or Sars, as he was called by all on the force, never went out on duty without meeting an adventure. Long before the automatic signals displaced the policemen at the busy crossings, Sergeant Daly took delight in managing the traffic at the busiest corners; and even though his duty in the office would have excused him from work in the streets, not a day passed without his relieving his men. It was said of him that the traffic simply passed through his fingers. He yelled at people, and talked to people, and scolded people, but all in such a way that no one took offence. Not a few of his daily passers-by were either too quick or too tardy, simply for the fun of drawing remarks from the sergeant.

When the streets were no longer crowded, Sergeant Daly came into the private office of Sergeant Terry to narrate the adventures of the day. While other officers handled just

as many crossings each day as did Sergeant Daly, and all without a single item of interest in a week, something remarkable and worthy of note happened every hour with him. He could not go home at night until he had rehearsed each accident with his associate.

In the closing months of the presidency of President Wilson, some political influence secured for Sergeant Daly the position of traffic officer in front of the White House. Often did the sergeant regret that he had accepted the place of honor. New York! New York! How he sighed for New York! How he missed the evenings with Sergeant Terry. In Washington all was work and no diversion. There was no one to listen to Daly, and no one to laugh at his difficulties and adventures.

Sergeant Terry, too, missed the hours with his former associate. He did not realize what a pleasure and distraction was the companionship of Daly, until the latter had gone away. Both looked forward to the time when they would work together on the New York police force, and have their quiet evenings in the office at the close of the day.

Neither of the boys had met Sergeant Daly,

but they had often heard their father speak of him.

"I wonder whether we'll meet him," said Valentine, when his father had explained that the sergeant would accompany the President's special force.

"You must remember, son, that South Dakota is a large place. We have all been surprised since we began to study the state; but I am sure you'll be still more surprised when you have had some experience."

"Our program calls for two weeks in the Black Hills, and a ride to the President's lodge," and Vincent produced the printed outlines of each week at the camp.

"That's all possible without seeing the President or Sergeant Daly," explained the father. "I'm not acquainted with the location of the President's lodge, but it is probable that you will not see the President or my friend the sergeant."

"Well, we're going out to rough it," replied Vincent. "We can see the President some other time."

"You can't see him just when you want to," put in Valentine. "I hope we see him on the trip, and Sergeant Daly, too."

SADDLES FOR ALL

Mr. Terry had been examining the program. "It's all nice to make out such a long ride and one that will take you to the President's lodge, but remember this," he remarked, "thousands of people pass by the White House in Washington every day, but few of them see the President, and fewer still have a chance to call on him. Your director can take you for a ride along the highway and in front of the President's lodge, but I am afraid that is about as close as you will get to him."

"That's close enough for me," answered Vincent. "Besides we'll be tired when we reach the Black Hills, and we'll have only outing suits; we won't want to see the President under those conditions."

"That is a rather strenuous ride," continued the father, still looking at the program. "That is your longest trip; it's eighty miles, and it's to be made in three days. That's not bad for soldiers, but remember that none of you have had any experience in riding."

"We have a long practice before the start for the Black Hills," and Valentine pointed to the date. "Besides," he added, "the smaller boys will not be allowed to join the crowd

unless they have shown that they can stand three days in the saddle."

"Bet you I can stand it," broke in Vincent, "and even if we don't see the President, I want to see the Black Hills. Gee: I must hurry and study that Latin!" and the boy turned to leave the room.

"If you want to see the Black Hills, you had better study, and study hard," called out the father. "One condition of the trip is, that you pass in every branch, and get an average of eighty-five."

"I'll get it, all right, all right," and Vincent disappeared.

"By the way," said the father turning to the older son, "I may be able to help out with some saddles. Who has charge of the camp?"

"Mr. Marvane; his name and address are on the announcement."

"Mr. Lloyd Marvane, S.J., St. Louis University High School, 4970 Oakland Blvd., St. Louis, Missouri. Write to him, son; let him know that you will donate thirty saddles to the camp. They are worth twenty-five dollars each. When the automatic signals were adopted, about six hundred mounted police were discharged and the horses sold. We

advertised the saddles but the highest offer we got was about sixty cents. They are in the store-room of the office. The chief said, a few days ago, that he would have to pay some one to take them away. I offered to relieve him of 'em, and he gave 'em to me. Write to Mr. Marvane and ask him whether he can use 'em."

"Use 'em?" repeated the boy, "I should say he can. I had a letter from him the other day and he said his only worry was to get enough saddles. You bet he can use 'em!"

"Then we'll send 'em to him."

"I don't think he'd want them in St. Louis."

"Find out where he wants them sent."

"We start from Ogalala in South Dakota."

"Then he'll want them sent to the mission."

"Here is another notice," added the boy. "It says that all freight must be shipped to Pine Ridge, South Dakota."

"The saddles must certainly go by freight, Wire Mr. Marvane tonight and offer him the saddles, and ask him where they must be sent."

"Gee! won't he be glad!" cried out the boy with evident delight. "Thirty saddles, and each worth twenty-five dollars. That makes—let me see—"

“Seven hundred and fifty dollars,” said the father who was quick with figures.

“Thirty times twenty-five; that’s right—seven hundred and fifty dollars. Gee: that’ll start the expedition, all right!”

Early on the following morning Mr. Marvane received a night letter from Valentine Terry. The professor and the future young camper had exchanged several letters in rapid succession, and a friendship had begun which was long to continue.

The message read: “My father offers thirty saddles for use at Camp Red Cloud. Used by the New York police. Second hand but in good condition. Can you use them? Where must we ship them?”

Before going to class that morning Mr. Marvane sent a dispatch to his young friend in New York:

“You have saved the day. Send saddles to Camp Red Cloud, Pine Ridge, South Dakota. I pay freight.”

CHAPTER III

THE BOY FROM THE BAD LANDS

UNNUMBERED ages ago, that part of the United States which is included in South Dakota and the surrounding states was covered by the ocean. For many years scientists have come to this section of the country to search for fossils, and have carried away with them the petrified remains of huge crocodiles, the bones of monster snakes, and well-preserved turtles measuring more than three feet in diameter.

Near the waters of the ocean there were long stretches of flooded plains over which wandered camels, primitive deer, saber-toothed tigers, tapirs, titanotheres, and hordes of other animals, many of which are either extinct or are no longer found on the North American continent. This whole tract of low land was often flooded, and the waters drove the herds of animals to the higher sections, only to be engulfed by a greater inundation and their bones washed together into a common tomb.

Later, when the water subsided, the ground hardened, and the bones were encased and petrified in the solid stone layer, while the marrow cavities were filled with calcite crystals.

Then there came a great earthquake, a mighty throe of nature which lifted the solid igneous rock of the Black Hills nearly eight thousand feet above the ocean bed. East of the Black Hills and what is now included in the stretch of country between the Cheyenne and the White Rivers, the strata of earth were thick enough to resist the pressure of the earthquake, but seams of molten rock forced their way through to the surface and in some instances spread out in huge cakes. With the raising of the land, the waters of the ocean went sweeping back in great cataracts and dug deep furrows in the newly-formed hills. This washed and furrowed land, extending in length a hundred and fifty miles and in width half that distance, is known as the Bad Lands of South Dakota.

Geologists tell us that there is no other formation in the world quite similar to the Bad Lands. There are long and entangled ravines, deep gorges, twisting labyrinths, weird and fantastic shapes. There appear

to rise before the visitor the ruins of great cities, the walls of crumbling fortresses and castles, the spires of cathedrals, the delicate outlines of turrets and minarets. It was old when the Alps and the Pyrenees were being formed, and when great marshes stretched where now rise the Himalayas. Owing to the igneous strata which forced itself through the bed of sandstone when the earthquake raised the ocean bottom, there are long seams or patterns in the hills known as graphic-granite and resembling the hieroglyphic writings of the Egyptians.

For the most part the landscape presents an appearance of dark brown clay; but at times bands of quartz, mica, and feldspar make the hills and cupolas glitter like the golden pagodas of India.

In the very heart of the most desolate stretch of the Bad Lands there is a table-land or mesa, now called Cuney Table, ten miles in length and about three in width, rising fully five hundred feet above the surrounding valleys. No doubt modern engineering could construct a winding road which would extend from the valley to the top of the mesa, but at present there is a tortuous ascent where only

strong farm wagons can be drawn. Even to reach this road it is necessary to travel more than thirty miles through one of the most desolate parts of the Bad Lands.

On this mesa dwelt a farmer by the name of Chester Marvane. Usually the family received no mail during the long winter months, and only a few times during the year did they drive fifty miles for groceries and other supplies.

South of the Bad Lands live some fifteen thousand Sioux Indians, the remnant of a once powerful tribe; and scattered throughout the Indian reservation are thirty chapels for the Catholic Sioux, attended by the Jesuit missionaries. One of the priests came twice a year from Holy Rosary Mission to visit the Marvane home and instruct the children. While teaching and directing Lloyd Marvane, a boy of nine, the priest thought that he discovered in the lad a vocation to the priesthood. When the boy was ten it was arranged that he could attend the school for the Indian children. At sixteen young Marvane entered the Campion Prep School at Prairie Du Chien, Wisconsin, and in due time was received into the Jesuit Novitiate, at Florissant, Missouri.

The years of preparation went swiftly by, and young Marvane, now a Jesuit Scholastic, entered upon his term of teaching at the St. Louis University High School. Often, when class was over, a number of boys remained to talk with the teacher about his experiences in the Bad Lands of South Dakota—of hunting porcupines, of shooting coyotes or prairie wolves, of trapping beavers and minks, of killing rattlesnakes and bob-cats, of wild rides over the mesas and down in the valley.

“Mr. Marvane,” said Henry Mohrman, one of the boys, at the close of an afternoon’s talk, “let us go up there and spend a vacation.”

“I’m with you,” joined in Albert Streit.

“And I,” chimed in Fred Ficht.

“Do you know how far it is from here?” asked the teacher.

Not a boy in the class had the remotest idea of the distance or the cost, but all agreed that the place offered an opportunity for a novel and romantic vacation.

“Mr. Marvane,” spoke up Harry Degnan, whose father was in the railroad service, “the Bad Lands can’t be far from the Black Hills,

and the railroads give excursion rates to Rapid City in the Black Hills every summer."

"I think I can get permission to go there," claimed John Turner.

"And I'm sure you can put me down," was the remark of Frank Hatton.

Before an hour had passed the little circle of boys had taken it for granted that vacation would be spent in the Bad Lands.

"Boys," said the teacher, "if our dreams should come true, and I hope they do, for I would certainly like to see the Bad Lands again, and to visit my parents and brothers and sisters — if it all comes true, I can promise each of you a pony for the summer."

"Will it be ours for the whole time?" young Mohrman wanted to know.

"Of course not," objected Frank Hatton, "that would be too expensive; we couldn't afford a horse for each fellow."

"There's where you are wrong, Frank," spoke up the teacher. "A good pony in South Dakota costs only ten dollars. I have seen them sell for five dollars. The first pony I ever owned cost just five dollars. And I tell you, I would like to give a race to any of the fine horses you see on the bridge path in Forest

Park. But the difficulty will be with the saddles, for the saddles cost twenty-five dollars and the horses only ten or at most fifteen.

Albert Streit volunteered to take a saddle with him.

“It’s all settled!” cried out Frank Hatton in wild delight. “Tickets ready! Off to the Bad Lands! Hurrah! Hurrah!” and the lad brought his books down upon a bench with such force that an ink bottle went rolling to the floor.

This burst of enthusiasm on the part of Frank Hatton settled the day. He had been called the outstanding American boy of the school. He had an instinct for honest mischief. Penances by prefects and teachers were parts of his regular routine of school life. But no one was ever angry with the boy, and he on his side had malice towards none.

“Put me down, Mr. Marvane,” were the words of Richard Hatton, an older brother of Frank. “I’ll be needed to keep this young kid brother of mine out of trouble.”

“I am afraid that more than yourself will be needed,” replied the teacher. “I’ve been trying all year, but without success. Isn’t that right, Frank?”

"Yes, but no hard feelings, mister."

"None whatever, but I'll get even with you when we reach the Bad Lands. I'll see that you get the wildest pony on the ranch. You may not tame the pony, but the pony will tame you. I'll stand aside and watch the taming process."

Before the crowd dispersed two other names were added to the campers, Larry Morrissey and Edward Kessler.

The boys were thoroughly in earnest about the plan and regarded the matter as definitely agreed on.

As Mr. Marvane was locking the class-room door Ralph Speaks came up. "Mister," he began, "what about my going with the crowd?"

"Fine, why do you ask me? Any difficulty?"

"Well, you know I am going to study for the priesthood, and I'm going to enter the Jesuit Novitiate at Florissant in August."

"Well, you are not sad about it, are you?"

"Not at all."

"Where's the difficulty?"

"I didn't know whether it would be just the right thing to do."

“It will be the best thing in the world for you to do. You need a little tan on your face and hands. You need an experience just like this camping. It will put you in fine trim. You know Mr. Albert Gerdor, the physics teacher?”

“Yes, but I wasn’t in his class.”

“He’s studying for the priesthood, and I don’t expect him to lose his vocation on this trip. He was at West Point, and was an expert cavalryman. He will have charge of the horses. And look at me. Do I look as if I were making a league with the devil?”

Ralph didn’t exactly see the point.

“I want to know whether I look as if I were making a league with the devil,” repeated the young Jesuit teacher. “Ralph, you mustn’t get too serious all at once. In fact, don’t get too serious at all. I am not only going with the crowd, that is, if the project succeeds, but I’ll have to be general manager, perhaps cook and bottle washer, and have half a dozen other jobs. Come right along. You will be in good company. Honest fun and manly sport is always good. It is good for any boy. It won’t hurt any boy. It will do him good and if he is to study for the priesthood, he will be

all the better off for just such an experience as I hope the boys will have this summer. But this isn't the time for a lecture. If the project succeeds we'll expect to have you as one of the number."

"My parents will let me go if you think it's all right, Mr. Marvane."

"Of course it's all right. This doesn't mean that the project will go through. But I hope it does, and if so, we'll expect to have you with us."

"You can rely on me." And the boy turned down the long corridor of the High School.

As Mr. Marvane walked towards his room many thoughts rushed to his mind. The old home! How he would like to see the inmates of the old home — father, mother, sisters, brothers. How they would welcome him! The camp life on the mesa, the towering pinnacles and deep ravines of the Bad Lands. How quickly the scenes passed before his mind!

Then the young teacher laughed at his own dreams and the suddenly-formed plans of the members of his class. For half an hour he had talked to the boys of the project, and at

the end of the conversation the lads had jumped to the conclusion that the summer camp was to be a reality.

It was a new and untried scheme; now that the project was started, Mr. Marvane would test it out.

CHAPTER IV

RAPID DEVELOPMENTS

“**I**’VE got permission,” and Albert Streit came bounding into the class-room.

“And put me down with capital letters,” shouted Frank Hatton.

“Yes, I’ll put you down for a penance after school for all this noise,” replied Mr. Marvane quietly. “What’s all this about?”

“The camp, the camp in South Dakota!” Young Hatton lowered his voice slightly, but he could still be heard far down the corridor.

“You mean that foolish arrangement we were talking about yesterday afternoon?” And the young Scholastic made an unsuccessful effort not to be interested.

“You are just kidding us, Mr. Marvane,” spoke up Albert. “You know you are anxious to go.”

“Anxious!” cried out Hatton, “anxious! Why I’m just dying to start to-morrow. I simply can’t wait until the examinations are over.”

“ Seriously, boys,” explained the teacher, “ there is one big, big difficulty; it’s the expense. I figure out it will cost each boy at least two hundred dollars, besides travelling expenses.”

“ Oh, that’s nothing,” answered Frank Hatton. “ My mother would pay five hundred dollars to get rid of me during vacation. Besides, I can save the organization some money.

“ Organization? ” interrupted Albert Streit. “ What’s the use of using such a big word for a summer camp? ”

“ Well, it has to be organized, doesn’t it? And I say I can save it money. I can cut down the fuel bill, I’ll bring a fire with me. Look at this!” and young Hatton ran his hands through his long red hair.

“ Yes, you’re lit up, and that’s what makes you so bright,” added Albert.

“ Sure, I can also light the camp.”

“ Well, boys,” said the teacher, “ to show you that I have thought the matter over, look at this map. It’s a sketch of the south-west section of South Dakota.” As he spoke, Mr. Marvane ran his pencil over some rough lines. “ Here is the railroad and the little town of

Ogalala thirty miles away. We'll make the town our headquarters, for there's no other place to get the wagons for supplies and the horses for the campers. This line represents the road from Ogalala to Stronghold. Half the road is through the Bad Lands. It's eighty miles long. I do not know just how far a truck can go, but I am sure that wagons must be used for the last part of the road. This trucking and hauling cost money. All the camping outfit and all the provisions must be carried from the station to Ogalala and from the town to the camp. But luckily we will not need the top of Frank's head for firewood, for the canyon at Stronghold is full of pine trees."

"But you'll have to buy a saddle for me," put in Albert Streit; "someone stole the old saddle at home."

"Yes, the saddles," said the teacher. "I figure out that we'll need forty boys to make the camping party pay expenses; and forty saddles, at twenty five dollars a piece, makes just a thousand dollars. How many boys can we get in St. Louis?"

"Ten," said Albert

"Twenty," claimed Frank.

“Boys, if we can get ten campers to come from St. Louis, I believe I can secure thirty from other high schools. Now, here is a little secret. I had a long talk with my superior last night. Now keep still for five minutes,” and Mr. Marvane put his hand over the mouth of young Hatton, who was preparing to shout. “In the first place, I am to write to Father Manley and get his approval of the plan, and find out whether Holy Rosary Mission near Ogalala can furnish the ponies, and also get some figures about the cost of transportation. Then, and here is where I’m afraid that the plan may fail, each boy who applies for the privilege of the camp must pay in advance. You see we cannot go to all the expense, and then have a number of the boys change their minds. I sent a special delivery letter to Father Manley last night. If he favors the camp, I’m going to carry an ad in several papers. In two days I shall let you know whether the list is ready for applicants.”

Several other members of the class came into the room, and the thoughts of the boys were directed to their books.

Those were busy days for Mr. Lloyd Marvane. The reply from Father Manley was

most encouraging, and he gave the assurance that he would do all in his power to assist the boys.

The next move was to prepare an advertisement for the papers. Mr. Marvane would have something new and attractive:

CAMP RED CLOUD

Come to South Dakota for your vacation. Under the direction of Jesuit Scholastics. A pony for each boy. No molly coddles wanted. Be ready to ride twenty-five miles a day or to hike ten, to pitch tents, and wash dishes. Come out and rough it in South Dakota, the land of the Sioux, the land of the wigwam. Address L. Marvane, St. Louis University High School, St. Louis, Missouri.

It was this advertisement in a New York paper that had caught the attention of Vincent Terry and started the contention about the merits of South Dakota and the Adirondacks.

While the two brothers were arguing for their respective locations, the morning papers

announced that President Coolidge would go to South Dakota for his vacation.

Mr. Marvane was not slow to seize upon this announcement and immediately dispatched to the papers to add a line:

CAMP WITH COOLIDGE IN SOUTH DAKOTA

The responses to the ads were most encouraging. Four came from New York — Valentine and Vincent Terry, Walter Trum and Stephen Duffy. From Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago, Omaha, Kansas City and smaller cities and towns, the letters came in.

Some were disappointed when they could not meet the expenses of the camp, and others failed to send in their checks as required by the regulation; but when the end of June came, forty-six boys were ready to take the train to Omaha and from there to the little town in South Dakota.

In the meanwhile the offer of the saddles by the young Terrys had solved one of the largest items of expense; not only for the first year, but for each of the succeeding years, if the camping project proved a success.

Father Manley had written from the mis-

sion that he could secure a dozen saddles for summer use, and that an Indian expert was breaking in the ponies. A truck would carry the equipment half way to Stronghold, and Indian wagons would take it the remaining distance at a reasonable figure. He also advised Mr. Marvane to buy a large tent and several small ones instead of renting them, as had first been planned.

It was evident from his letters that Father Manley favored the camping project and entered into it with real enthusiasm.

Venerable missionary was Father Stephen Manley, S.J. For forty-two years he had labored among the Sioux Indians in South Dakota. He knew many of the braves who fought in Custer's last charge, and he had done all in his power to prevent the battle of Wounded Knee. He had come among the Sioux as a young priest and had learned to speak their language in less than three months. All during the year he was engaged at the mission where nearly five hundred Indian children were taught. The buildings were empty during the summer and the grounds quiet. He would welcome a crowd of noisy boys and enjoy their pranks and fun.

CHAPTER V

STRONGHOLD

ELEVEN days had passed since the boys arrived at Ogalala and had visited Holy Rosary Mission. Often had they talked of the kind reception given them by the venerable Father Manley, and the kindness of the Franciscan Sisters at the mission in providing them with many little things which they had forgotten to bring; especially a little box containing an antidote against rattlesnake bites. When the Sister infirmarian called them into the infirmary and gave them the brass boxes, some of them began for the first time to realize that they were going into a country where at least it was possible to be bitten by rattlesnakes.

Then the days of practice with the ponies would long be remembered. True to his promise, Mr. Marvane had given Frank Hatton a wild and bucking pony, and more than once the lad had found himself lying on the soft ground in the pasture where the boys

practiced. Donald Cardy of Chicago had asked for a real circus pony and had not been disappointed. Donald escaped with a sprained wrist and a thumping headache, and then picked a horse that was more considerate of a person's safety. Phil and John Dorger being from Kentucky were confident that they were great horsemen, but after the first day they explained that Kentucky race horses were quite unlike Indian ponies. Bob McEverly, called Norwood Bob, as he was from Norwood, Ohio, was the only camper who succeeded in taming a really wild pony.

But the riding and practice were all over. The wilder ponies had been sent back to the pasture for a longer season of "breaking" and tamer animals were given the boys. The Indian horse-trainer, who bore the paradoxical name of Afraid-of-his-horses, had finally announced that the boys were ready to start for their ride of eighty miles.

When the trip was over every boy was in the best of spirits.

It was three o'clock in the afternoon when the mesa was reached, and four when the cavalcade came to a halt before the gate of Stronghold.

Now don't imagine that Stronghold was a high castle like those you read about in the novels of Walter Scott; and don't imagine that the gate was of wrought iron or bronze, and very artistic. It was a matter-of-fact gate, made of rough timber and entangled with barbed wire. On one of the posts of the gate was a sign: *Keep out, men, coyotes and everything.*

At a signal from Mr. Marvane, all the boys, while still mounted, gathered around him.

"Boys," said he, "read that sign. The man who owns the property beyond the gate is not friendly, and we must give him no reason for complaining."

"Mr. Marvane," came a voice from the crowd; it was John Sexton of Chicago speaking, "I'm not a man, or coyote, or anything, can't I go in?"

"Down with Chicago! Away with Chicago!" came a dozen voices. "He's nothing! he's nobody!"

From that day John Sexton was known as *Nothing*.

After some words of advice from the teacher, all dismounted and every boy was assigned work in the construction of the camp,

First the big tent was raised, the one that was to be used for the kitchen, dining room, and general lounging place. Then the smaller tents went up, eight of them with five cots to a tent, and finally, close to the large tent, was one of medium size to be used as a chapel. It was so arranged that on rainy days a side of the large tent could be opened and the boys have protection while hearing daily Mass; for daily Mass, and Communion for most of the boys, was a part of the program.

While the boys are working hard at the new camp site, I shall tell you something about Stronghold, and why this particular place was selected for the camp. It will be a very short narrative, and you will enjoy it. Besides, you must know something about the locality in order to understand many of the incidents of this story. Forget all about John Sexton and his brother Thomas, Frank Hatton and his brother Richard, Charles Higgins and his brother Henry, Valentine Terry and his brother Vincent, and the two or three other brothers who came along to be guardian angels to each other. Forget the campers for a few minutes, and let me tell you of Stronghold.

In the first place you will admit that Stronghold would seem to apply rather to a European castle than to the plains of the United States. And yet there was poetry and romance about this Stronghold in our own land. Painted chiefs and feathered warriors had danced here at night, and had scalped the fallen soldiers of the United States Army.

You have often heard of Custer's last charge. In that battle (1876) the brave leader and all his men met death at the hands of the Sioux Indians. The writer of these lines has talked to aged Indians who fought against Custer and his men. From 1876 to 1890 the government had trouble with the Sioux, not because the Indians were hostile or unfriendly, but because they wanted to travel. You know how people like to go on long drives in the summer. You see thousands of tourists on the road every day. Well, the Sioux Indians wanted to take a trip every spring, and to keep moving until the cold weather of October. This had been a custom with them for untold generations.

The Indians took little or no provision with them, and before the white settlers and hunters had killed the buffalo, the Sioux could depend on the vast herds for food, clothing, and tents.

But when the buffalo were killed, the Indian became a beggar, and I must confess that he sometimes became a thief. He did not consider himself a thief, but as one taking what others had taken from him. The white man had seized his land and killed his buffalo; he was hungry and took from the white man.

In vain did the United States soldiers follow the Indians and try to force them back into the Reservations. Finally, in 1891, the Sioux had a ghost dance and threatened to begin war with the whites. Soldiers were sent to disarm them, and the battle of Wounded Knee was fought. The Indians were outnumbered, and some two hundred of them were killed and many were disarmed. Those who escaped fled to Stronghold.

Half of my story of Stronghold is told. Listen to the rest of it. Now, don't mind the boys who are tugging at the ropes of the large tent. Don't be distracted by the remarks of Gilbert Murphy who is giving orders and allowing others to do the work. And don't mind Bill Roberts; he's from Chicago and of course must talk. There are the McAnany brothers, and the Higgins brothers and the Lux brothers; but I don't know which

is the guardian angel of the other. The tent will be up in a few minutes, but not until I have completed my history of Stronghold.

Well, many of the Indians fled to Stronghold. As far as I can learn, the name was given to the place by the soldiers after they had made many attempts to capture it, and had lost a number of their men. I can best explain the place in this way. In the very heart of the Bad Lands is a mesa or table-land divided into two parts, the larger part being about six miles long and three miles wide, and shaped like an egg. Let us compare it to a hen's egg. The other is three miles long and about a mile wide. Let us compare it to a bird's egg. Now you bring the two eggs together at the smaller ends, and right at the point of contact you have Stronghold.

You will recall that the sides of this mesa or double mesa are seven hundred or eight hundred feet high, and so steep that not even a coyote or Indian could climb up the sides to the top. Besides, there was no road leading to the small mesa, which we have compared to a bird's egg. It was necessary to ascend the larger table-land and then enter the smaller one just where the two eggs touched.

By actual measurement, as the writer recalls it, the little strip of land connecting the large and small mesas is about forty feet, ten feet for a gate and thirty feet for a strong fence of barbed wire. And now you will understand why the Indians sought refuge on the small mesa or table-land. A few braves could guard the narrow entrance. Moreover, they could hide in the deep and ragged gullies on each side of the entrance, and from the hidden recesses could pick off every soldier who attempted to pass. Man after man from the army of the United States fell while trying to cross the strip of land at Stronghold. Finally the attempt was abandoned, but the Indians were starved into submission and one by one they came up and surrendered their arms. From that time to this, there has been no fighting with the Indians.

And now the big tent is up and Gilbert Murphy is congratulating the boys for their steady work.

But the small tents are to be raised, and while the work is progressing, you will want to know why this place was chosen as a site for the camp, and why the camp was called Red Cloud. Red Cloud Hall is one of the

largest buildings at Holy Rosary Mission, and is named after the great Indian chief, who is buried in the mission graveyard. It was at the suggestion of Father Manley that the camp was called after the old chief. Long had they been friends. Long had they worked for the good of the Sioux; and history tells us that many a life of a settler and soldier would have been saved had the advice of Father Manley and Red Cloud been followed.

The location was chosen by Mr. Marvane. I am free to say that on the large mesa and three miles away could be seen the smoke of the Marvane home, and also that the young religious had enough of the human in him to enjoy an occasional visit to his parents. But apart from this consideration the choice was an excellent one. Fifteen feet below the edge of the mesa was a natural terrace fully a thousand feet wide and covered with pine trees, and from it came out a stream of the coolest water. Leading from the mesa down to the terrace was a ladder made of pine branches and so wide that three boys could go down or up abreast. A windlass consisting of an endless chain enabled one to bring up sufficient water for the camp with but little labor.

Then, there was a fascination in climbing down to the terrace and finding rest and shade on hot days, and of drinking the cool water as it gushed from the hill.

But let us take a look at the small tents. Yes, they are all up and arranged in two rows. And now all gather around the last tent, which is to be used for a chapel. Up it goes, and soon Father William Bowman, the chaplain, will be erecting his temporary altar. I have not introduced you to the young chaplain. He looks almost as young as some of the boys. He was ordained only three weeks ago and said his first Mass on the 29th of June, the feast day of Saints Peter and Paul. He has volunteered to spend his vacation with the boys and down among the cool pine trees on the terrace he will recite his office each day and give many a word of advice to the young campers.

Out over the mesa wild flowers grow in wild disorder. There are meadow parsnips, golden sunflowers, fox tail, sand lilies, and prairie sage, nor must the buttonsnake-root or the rattlesnake-root be despised as ornaments for the altar; nor the long-beaked sedge, nor the blue joint-grass. The small rock-pines and

red-ozier dogwood will furnish the back ground for many a decoration in the chapel.

And now the chapel is ready and the altar erected and decorated with flowers. Father Bowman asks the boys to join with him saying a decade of the rosary.

When they came from the tent, confronting them was a tall, husky man, with a short beard and villainous look. He informed the boys that he owned the small mesa and would shoot any intruder who passed the gate of Stronghold.

CHAPTER VI

TENT NUMBER SEVEN

LONG before the summer vacation was over, Mr. Marvane had to acknowledge that he had made a number of mistakes in dealing with the boys; not serious mistakes, but such as added to his responsibility and caused him considerable uneasiness. One trouble arose from the combination of characters in tent number seven.

One of the unwritten laws of the camp was that there were to be as few laws and regulations as possible. Among other things the boys were left to pick their own tent companions. As a result, all the mischief-makers found cots in the same tent. On the first day, before the sun went down and the camp life was established, mischief was brewing. How could it be otherwise? Not one of the occupants could go through a day without trouble of some kind. How could anyone expect the combination to remain quiet?

In the first place there was Frank Hatton of St. Louis. He did not know what turn things would take out in South Dakota, but he was sure that trouble of some kind would be stirred up. Bevan McAnany of Kansas City, known as "Bev," Walter Trum, Stephen Duffy, and Vincent Terry were the other four occupants of the tent.

As the afternoon wore on, the quiet of camp was broken by the shrill cry of Bev: "Rattlesnake! rattlesnake!"

Out of the tents ran the excited boys, and soon the cry, "Here it is! here it is!" was heard from a dozen throats.

"Keep away from it! not too close, boys, not too close!" were the warning words of Father Bowman.

The snake seemed to be more frightened than its pursuers. Several times it succeeded in hiding in the high grass, only to be discovered and driven on by its many enemies.

"Head it off! head it off!" came the words of the crowd, as the snake worked its way towards the gate of Stronghold.

Thomas Naughtin, who came from Omaha, and therefore felt that he should know more about western snakes than any of the campers,

kept quite close to the retreating reptile. Then suddenly he gave a cry of pain.

"It bit me! it bit me!" he cried aloud.

Immediately there was pandemonium and some of the boys stood aghast.

"Get your box of powder," cried one.

"The snake powder! the snake powder!"

But not a boy could find the box which the Sister had given them before they left the mission.

While some ran to the tents to look for the powder, Frank Hatton and the other occupants of his tent went right on after the snake. Frank had a suspicion that the bitten boy would live, if only the snake were killed.

For a moment the snake was in the short grass, where it could be distinctly seen. It appeared to be a monster. Later in discussing its size some boys claimed that it was at least eight feet long, while Justin Thompkins and Charles Higgins were sure that it would measure ten feet.

From the clearing near the fence the snake seemed to dash on with extraordinary speed; and in a few seconds disappeared through the gate of Stronghold.

Now the gate was always locked and the

fence was supposed to be proof against all intruders; but without giving a thought to the owner's threat a short time before, Frank Hatton scrambled up one of the posts and dropped down into the forbidden land, while the other occupants of the same tent followed him.

Again the pursuit of the snake was taken up. Once when they were close, it turned mightily into their faces.

Walter Trum, who was the nearest, was sure that he was either poisoned or charmed for the rest of his life. The boys fell back and the pursuit ended.

In their excitement the boys had not noticed the owner riding towards them. At first sight they had called him "Old Whiskers." And now, in less than an hour, they had gone against the command and had incurred the penalty of being shot.

He bore down upon them with threats and curses, and ordered them to leave the mesa. As he spoke, he cracked a long whip over his head and came within a few inches of the shoulders of the lads.

It had seemed an easy matter to climb the high fence even with its barbed wire impedi-

ments, but the retreat in the presence of the man, who urged them on, was slow. Their feet were caught in the entanglement; Bev's hand was cut by one of the protruding barbs, and Stephen Duffy's pants were slit at the side.

In the excitement Mr. Marvane came running up and asked the pardon of the owner for the intrusion of the boys.

"Mr. Goodlow," he spoke aloud, "don't you remember me? I'm Lloyd Marvane."

"That you is. Thought you has gone off and joined the ministers. Well, I'll rustle my sheep! If this ain't Lloyd! You is the only one of the family I ever cared for. Your dad and me had lots of trouble over things, and we ain't no friends. But I'm darned glad to see his boy. What is you doing here?"

"I've charge of these boys and camp."

"Then, if you want to be my friend, you must keep them away from my sheep farm."

"I'll do my best. I heard you were here about an hour ago, and was sorry I missed you. They are good boys, and I know that I can keep them away from your place."

"If you don't I'll fill 'em with shot."

"You wouldn't do that, Mr. Goodlow."

"I would do that! I rustle my sheep that I'll do it! But what's going on over there?" and he pointed to the crowd around the bitten boy.

"A rattlesnake has stung one of the campers."

"Are you sure it was a rattler?" asked the man.

"Yes, sir," spoke up young Terry, "we chased it this far, and it got up, and you should have seen it blow at us."

"Well, rustle my sheep! It's only an old bull snake, or some folks call it a blow snake. That boy'd been dead long ago if it was a rattler. Go right over there and tell the folks not to mind. It ain't much worse an' a wasp bite. The boy'll be able to eat his supper, and tomorrow he won't know he's bit."

By this time Frank Hatton had succeeded in scaling the fence.

"Cut it all out! It wasn't a rattler; it was a bull snake;" he cried aloud as he rushed into the middle of the crowd and shoved the boys aside.

"How do you know?" asked Father Bowman.

"Old Whiskers said so."

“How does he know?”

“We told him the snake puffed at us. Rattlesnakes don’t puff. So it wasn’t a rattlesnake.”

“Thank God,” said the priest. “Tom,” he continued, holding the boy’s hand, “you are all right. It wasn’t a rattlesnake but a blow snake.”

“Yes, and it isn’t worse than a bee sting, Whiskers says,” explained Frank.

“I notice the swelling is very slight,” were the words of Father Bowman, as he examined the sting closely.

After several applications of cold water the swelling was scarcely noticeable, and the slight pain was gone.

“Boys,” said Mr. Marvane, walking into the crowd followed by Goodlow, “this is an old friend of mine. He knew me when I was a boy, and he let me hunt porcupines on his property. I understand that he was here only a short time ago, and told you boys to keep off his place. I’m sorry that some of you were disobedient.”

“The next time it happens, there’s going to be a funeral out here,” said the man.

He was stern in extreme, and convinced the lads that his was not an idle threat.

“Mr. Goodlow tells me,” continued the teacher, “that hunters have left his gate open at night. Coyotes got into the mesa and killed over a hundred sheep before they were trapped. That’s the reason he keeps all strangers out.”

“Keeps everybody out!” put in the man. “Everybody! I don’t want no people in my sheep farm. I may have more than sheep here; I may have gold, and I may have some of them fine stones they is selling up on the Black Hills, some of ’em yaller and blue stones what they use for rings and things. These Bad Lands is first cousins to the Black Hills, and if there’s gold and stones in the Black Hills, why can’t there be the same here in the Bad Lands? And if they is here, I want ’em for myself. I’ve been fighting for this lard for thirty years; and I’m going to fight for it to the end. And I’m going to shoot any fellow who comes in without my permission.”

“Mr. Goodlow,” said the teacher, “let me ask you one favor for the boys. Let them have one porcupine hunt on your mesa. I’ll

promise you that they won't bother you any more."

"And they won't carry no gold away or nice stones?"

"Not a thing. We'll try to get a couple of fat porcupines for a meal."

"Well, Lloyd, you're just a little boy to me and not a minister. We was always friends even when I had a fight with your father about the title to my property. You can bring the boys in once. Let me know, and I'll be here to unlock the gate when they is ready."

CHAPTER VII

A MIDNIGHT ATTACK

“WE’VE certainly got a fine crowd of young fellows.” The remark was made in a low voice by Mr. Marvane.

He and Mr. Gerdor were on their cots late in the evening after seeing the boys to bed.

“Yes, things have gone on nicely,” was the reply. “But,” added Mr. Gerdor, “I expect a little trouble in tent number seven.”

“There is just one circumstance that will save the day.”

“What is that?”

“Those boys will be so tired at night that they’ll fall asleep without thinking of any mischief.”

“Possibly so; but to forestall any trouble and mischief, I think we should find some excuse to separate Trum and Hatton.

“How about Stephen Duffy?”

“The lad from Brooklyn?”

“Certainly.”

“He may get into trouble during the day,

but not at night. I can hear him snoring as soon as his head touches the pillow."

"That's the fresh air and exercise."

"It's a rather husky crowd. I was afraid that we'd get a number of weaklings. But it's time for us to turn in."

By the light of a small oil lamp Mr. Lloyd Marvane began to recite the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin.

His devotions had not continued long when there was a loud cry of horror, and Jack Healy came dashing into the tent followed by Fred Sullivan, Thomas Higgins, and Jack Markman.

"Big Indians after us," stammered young Healy.

"Indians, your grandmother," answered Mr. Gerdor. "There's not an Indian within five miles of this place."

"Yes—there are—and they're all painted," gasped Jack Markman.

"And—they've got tommy-hawks," cried out Fred.

"Tommy nothing!" protested Mr. Marvane.

"You boys ate too much of that ham for supper, and you've had a night-mare," put in Mr. Gerdor."

“ I declare for goodness, Mr. Gerdor,” protested Healy, “ they’re real Indians, and they wanted to to scalp us. There they come! don’t you hear ’em? ”

“ I hear something,” said Mr. Marvane, “ and we’ll soon find out what it’s all about. Come on with me.”

“ I don’t want to come, Mr. Marvane,” protested Fred Sullivan.

“ They’re wild Indians, and I’m going to stay right here,” declared Jack Markman.

“ Come on, come on, boys, I’ll protect you,” said the professor.

Just then a head was thrust into the tent.

“ You’re a great Indian,” cried out Mr. Gerdor, and with these words he pulled the feathers and trapping from the head of Frank Hatton.

“ And here’s another wild one; let us see who it is,” and Mr. Marvane snatched the costume from Stephen Duffy.

“ Where did you boys get all these things? ” asked Mr. Marvane.

“ Out of the big tent,” was the reply of the third Indian who proved to be Walter Trum.

“ I see that I’ll have to put everything under lock and key,” were the words of Mr.

Marvane. "You boys know well enough that we brought all these costumes along from the mission to wear in the parade in honor of President Coolidge. Get to bed every one of you!"

"Gee! I thought you fellows were real Indians," said young Healy.

"Where are the other two members of tent number seven? I suppose they have on their war paint also? Where are they?" asked Mr. Gerdor.

In answer to the question, in walked Bev McAnany, removing the costume and keeping at a safe distance from the young professors.

"Where is Vincent Terry?" asked Mr. Marvane of the boys.

"He must be running around the camp scalping boys," replied Frank Hatton.

"Well, there'll be a few Indians scalped, if I hear any more noise tonight," protested Mr. Marvane. But it was evident from the way he spoke, that he had enjoyed the little mischief.

Half an hour later all was quite in the camp. Mr. Marvane had finished his devotions and was sitting with the little prayer book in his hands.

He heard a slight noise and turning saw Walter Trum standing at the entrance.

"Excuse me, Mr. Marvane," were the words of the boy," but Vin Terry isn't in his cot."

"Was he one of the Indians?"

"Yes, sir, all the boys in our tent had on costumes."

"Did he come here with you?"

"He started with me and then—I don't know where he went."

"So, he hasn't come back."

"No, sir."

"I hope he hasn't fallen down into one of the crevices. You boys know that I told you not to wander around in the dark."

"Yes, sir. We intended to scalp a few boys, and then beat it to our tent."

"What were you to do with the scalps?" and Mr. Marvane pretended to speak in earnest.

"Oh, we were just playing scalping."

"Perhaps by mistake you scalped young Terry. But we must find him at once."

"I'm looking for the boss of this here camp," came a loud voice from without.

"Here I am," replied Mr. Marvane pulling aside the canvas at the entrance. "Why Mr.

Goodlow, I had hoped there would be no more trouble. Has it happened so soon? ”

“ Here’s one of your young critters. I caught’m sneaking through the fence.” And George Goodlow shook Vincent Terry by the collar.

“ I was just hiding, Mr. Marvane.”

“ Well, you were told not to enter the man’s property.”

“ That they was. I heard you tell ’em, and if I catch another one beyond the gate, I won’t be responsible for what happens.”

“ Mr. Marvane,” explained young Terry, “ I climbed over the gate to get away from the camp. When I heard all the boys yelling, I knew you would be after us, so I wanted to hide for a short time and then slip back into my tent.”

“ I understand that you did not wish to break the laws of the camp,” said Mr. Marvane, “ but we promised this man not to intrude upon his property, and I am sorry that one of the campers has disregarded the rule. But you can see, sir,” he continued turning to the man, “ that the boy did not intend to trespass upon your property. He was just having a little fun and nonsense and simply

wanted to hide beyond the gate for a few minutes."

"Fun or no fun," replied George Goodlow with an oath, "fun or no fun, them boys must keep out of my property. Do you hear? I put up that gate to keep people out, and if the gate won't keep 'em out I know what will."

"You certainly wouldn't injure one of the boys."

"I've injured more'n one person in my life. I scared the fellow who owned this property at one time; scared him so that he run away and never come back. I'm through talking and, rustle my sheep, if I don't do more'n scare'em!"

With these words the man released his hold on the boy and pushed him violently towards Mr. Marvane. "Keep 'em out! keep 'em out!" repeated the man. "Keep 'em out or there'll be trouble, and don't blame me!"

With these words George Goodlow walked out into the darkness.

A half hour passed and again peace reigned in Camp Red Cloud.

Tossing on his cot Vincent Terry could not sleep. Had he dreamed it or did he really hear the words? Did Mr. Goodlow say that

he had stolen the property from a man named Pat Terry and that the man moved to New York?

When the boy was crouching by the side of the gate along came some one driving a team. Dismounting to open the gate and turning his lantern, the driver had discovered the boy.

With an oath he had grabbed the lad.

“In here, are you?” he cried. “Ready to open the gate and let in coyotes and have ’em kill my sheep. This property is mine, even if I did steal it, stole it from old Pat Terry. Stole it and drove ’im away. Nobody dares come here. They’re afraid of me, afraid of George Goodlow. And I’ll make you boys afraid,” and he emphasized his threat with another oath.

Had Vincent Terry fallen asleep for a few minutes and dreamed that he heard these words? Had he really heard such words?

The lad sat up in his cot and rubbed his eyes. He lit a match and saw that it was only half past eleven. His companions were fast asleep. No, he had not dreamed; he had not been asleep. That man had boasted of stealing the property from the former owner, and that owner was named Pat Terry.

CHAPTER VIII

CATCHING THE RATTLESNAKE

“COME on, Val, I want to show you a rattlesnake I caught.”

“Go, on, Vin, you’d run your legs off if you saw one.”

“Honest to goodness, and when you see it, you’ll be a surprised boy.”

“Where is it? Just tell me about it.”

“No, I want you to see it. Come on with me.”

“Where’s all the secret? What’re you talking in whispers about?”

“It’s just for you and me. I don’t want the other fellows to know.”

“So it isn’t a rattlesnake, but something else. Can’t you tell me about it here?”

“No, some of the other boys may come in. Please come on with me, and let me tell you something.”

“Say, this is mysterious; what’s it all about?”

"You'll see, and when I've told you, you'll agree with me that it is mysterious."

"Tell me right here; I don't like to leave this soft cot."

"Come on! come on! before one of the boys returns."

"Say, I'm interested in this story book."

"I don't care. I have a story for you that will be more interesting than any novel. Come on!"

"Well, just to please you, I suppose I must go with you," and Valentine Terry threw down the book and followed his younger brother from the tent.

It was early in the morning following the attack by the Indians from tent number seven, and the arrest of Vincent Terry by the owner of Stronghold. Vincent had watched his opportunity to find his brother alone, and to convey to him the information which he had gathered from the testimony of George Goodlow about the real ownership of the mesa beyond the gate.

"Dad owns Stronghold," he began, as he and his brother sauntered away from the camp."

"That's interesting; tell me all about it."

"You bet it's interesting. It's a hummer of a story, and you and I will be rich men."

"Very interesting, indeed; this South Dakota weather seems to be working on your brain."

"You bet, it's working on my brain. It has made my brain clear enough to make a discovery, and the discovery is that Dad owns Stronghold."

"Out with your proofs. I'll listen."

"Will you listen? You make fun of my arguments before I have started with them."

"Cross my heart and soul, I'll listen."

"Then listen. Last night when we pulled off that fake attack on the camp, I didn't think the boys would be so frightened, I didn't think we'd fool 'em. But when things got serious, I thought Mr. Marvane would be displeased, and so I beat it from the camp. I knew that he would never look for a boy on the other side of the gate. Over I went and was congratulating myself on my hiding place when along came a person with a lantern. I didn't know where to run. There I lay, and up come old man Goodlow and seized me by the collar, and how he cursed, and . . . "

“What’s all this to do with Dad and Stronghold?”

“If you’ll listen, I’ll tell what it has to do. It has everything to do with the matter.”

“All right, go on with your story. I heard it all so far. Mr. Marvane told the boys who were not present when old Goodlow brought you in.”

“Well, when the man had cursed me, and swore he’d shoot the next boy he found in the mesa, he said he had stolen the property from a man named Terry, and that the man was so frightened he left South Dakota and went to New York.”

“I don’t see why the man brought in that remark.”

“I don’t either, except he said he had trouble getting the property and wasn’t going to lose it by letting people come into the place and making it a public hunting grounds. Oh, I don’t remember all he said, and I don’t know why he said it all; but he did say that he had stolen the property from a man named Pat Terry.”

“That was our grandfather,” put in Valentine. “Haven’t you heard Dad say that he owned a piece of property in South Dakota

and that he held the deed given him by grandpa?"

"Yes, I recalled it all while the man was talking and boasting that he had stolen the property."

"Did you tell him that your name was Terry?"

"Not on your life. I'm the son of a detective," and young Terry tossed his head to the side with evident pride.

"This is certainly interesting; tell me more about it," said the older brother, dropping down into the tall grass, for they were some distance from the camp. "But in the first place where does the rattlesnake come in?"

"Rattlesnake!" repeated the younger brother. "Don't you see? Don't you see the point? This man Goodlow is a snake in the grass. He's a thief and worse than a rattlesnake."

"Now I see, you're using a figure of speech. I forgot that you studied rhetoric last year. What kind of figure of speech is it that my young brother is using?"

"A metaphor, you block-head; you can always tell a metaphor by seeing whether the words *like* or *as* will fit into the sentence. I

could have said that old man Goodlow was sneaking around like a snake, then the figure would have been a simple simile; but if I leave out the word *like* or *as* and say that he is a snake, then I am using a metaphor."

"What a bright brother I have; he is both rhetorician and detective."

"Mr. Marvane is a poet; he read me one of his poems last night."

"Poetry, snakes, metaphors, similes, and the Lord knows what else. Will we never come to the real business?"

"You know all the real business I do. I have told you all I know. Here is a man who boasts he stole a piece of property from another man named Pat Terry, and this man Terry left the state and went to New York. It is up to us to find out whether this was Grandpa. You know it is about thirty years since he came to New York from South Dakota. Dad is a sergeant on the police force and a detective. He'd find this out before night. Can't we do the same?"

"You seem to think that because Dad is a detective, we can become Sherlock Holmeses."

"No, I don't. I'm just talking the matter over with you. I heard Dad say that most

cases started with insignificant facts, which at first did not seem to be connected with the ownership of the property. It's up to us to trace the connections."

"What I can't understand is, why the man should talk about such things under the circumstances. He finds a boy hiding on his property and at once begins to tell the boy what happened thirty years ago. I can't see the connection."

"I see some connection, at least a little connection. Old man Goodlow wants to keep people out of his sheep farm. He finds some one hiding there late at night. At once the thought comes to him that he had much trouble in getting the property, that he wasn't going to run any risk in losing it. He just blurts the things out at the same time. Besides, it happened so long ago that he isn't afraid of the owner coming back to claim the property."

"I believe you're right, Vin. I believe you're right. We'll fool that man Goodlow. Let's think it over. I promise you to keep it all a secret until we have found some way of investigating."

"I've already thought out a plan," replied the younger brother.

"Gee! you're going it fast," and Valentine Terry who had risen from his soft seat threw himself back on the grass beside his younger brother. "Let's hear the plan," he said.

"You heard old Goodlow say to Mr. Marvane that there were porcupines on his property destroying the young trees."

"Yes, what of it?"

"And that he wanted to get rid of the pests."

"Yes."

"And you heard Mr. Marvane say that fat porcupines were good for roasting."

"Yes, yes; but the property will never be regained if you go this slowly."

"Now let's get permission of Mr. Marvane to visit the old man, and ask permission to hunt porcupines."

"You don't get me on his place."

"We'll carry a white flag, then he won't hurt us."

"How can we learn anything about the property?"

"Heavens, Val, you'll never make a detective. Why we'll get the old fellow talking.

I'll get a good cigar from Mr. Marvane to treat him, and before you know it, we'll have all the information."

Back to the camp went the two brothers, found the camp director, and told him all that had happened.

Mr. Marvane would not give an immediate answer. He explained that he intended to visit his father on the following day and would probably put the matter before him.

CHAPTER IX

THE TESTIMONY OF CHESTER MARVANE

“HOW often I thought of the Bad Lands during the first year I was away from home! I went out of my tent the other night and stood for half an hour looking up to the heavens and listening to the wind coming over the valley. How quiet it was! I thought of the time when I followed my first coyote up the deep ravine, and was frightened when the report of my rifle rang out so clearly in the silence. And you remember how proud I was when I brought in the coyote and threw it down at your feet.” The speaker was Professor Marvane who had come to pay a visit to his parents.

“Yes, it seems but yesterday,” replied the father.

“Time will pass quickly and my ordination will soon be coming.”

“I thought that the time would be so long, so very long,” said the mother, “but God has

repaid us for the sacrifice, and we both look forward to the day of your ordination."

"Yes, won't it be a happy time?" replied the son. "I'll come back to the little Indian church here on the mesa and say my first Mass. In the meanwhile I am not idle. I am working and studying, and I offer up every day as a preparation for that great day."

"And we pray every day that God may spare us, and that we may get your priestly blessing," and the father spoke in a low voice as if the subject were too sacred for words.

The mother was silent, and wiped away the tears of holy joy.

"Here is one thing that really seems strange to me," continued the boy. "When I was young, I thought that flowers and other beautiful things were only for children. When I left home I imagined that I would never again care for hills and valleys, for the trees and clouds, for all the changes of nature. But now the wonderful works of God are more and more interesting to me than ever before. When I was making my two years of study after my novitiate I used to spend every Thursday on the banks of the Missouri River. How I enjoyed those days! Every season

had its appeal. I knew the song of every bird. I learned the name of every wild flower. What was only curious before, became under careful observation a wonderful work of the hand of God. Now that I am back on the old mesa, everything is far more interesting than it was when I was a boy. In fact I have put these thoughts into verse," and Lloyd Marvane drew from his pocket a piece of paper. "May I read it to you?" he asked.

His parents nodded assent.

"I should have come over to see you sooner," said the young professor, "but the work of starting the camp has been more than I had anticipated, and we had some trouble with old man Goodlow and were attacked by the Indians." As he spoke, Mr. Marvane unfolded the sheet of paper and laid it on the table before him.

"Attacked by Indians?" The father spoke with evident surprise. "Why, Son, the Indians don't attack people in this part of the country."

"It was only a joke," replied the son.

"I thought so," replied the father, leaning back in his chair; for he was a friend of the

Indians and was always ready to defend their good name.

"Yes, it was a joke by the boys in tent number seven. I think we made a mistake in putting all the mischief makers together; but, Father, the affair of old Goodlow worries me. One of the objects of my visit is to talk over this very matter."

"Years ago," said the father, "he had a bad reputation! He was regarded as a cattle and sheep rustler, and openly boasted that he had robbed people. But for the last fifteen years or so he has become quite friendly except for a dispute about a road. He has a fine summer home on his ranch and makes good money selling sheep. It costs him practically nothing to raise them."

"Why is he so strict about the gate into his property?" asked the son.

"You cannot blame him for that," explained the father. "You know the lay of his land. It is valuable for sheep raising because the coyotes cannot get at the sheep. It doesn't matter how many men you have, or how well you guard the sheep in an open pasture, the coyotes succeed in getting them. One man had two thousand sheep and drove

them into an enclosure every night. But night after night the coyotes came around, and howled and howled until the sheep were so frantic with fear that they huddled together in a heap and smothered each other. Many were found dead in the morning. At another time the coyotes got the watch dogs to follow them, and then evaded the dogs and got back and killed fifty sheep in less than half an hour. You know there is only a single gate entering the property of Mr. Goodlow. A few years ago some hunters left the gate open and coyotes got into the place. They hid and in the spring had young, and it took four years to kill off the beasts. You can't blame the man for guarding the gate of Stronghold."

"I can see why he should keep people out and the gates closed and locked," replied the son. "Moreover, I have told the boys not to go into the place. But last night some of the boys dressed up like Indians and scared the other fellows. Then one of the supposed Indians climbed over the gate of Stronghold to avoid detection. Unfortunately, Goodlow came just at that time and found him. He cursed, and threatened to kill the next boy who

got into his sheep pasture. Do you think he would injure one of the boys? ”

“ Keep ’em out, and then there’ll be no danger,” said the father.

“ Yes, keep ’em out; that’s easy to say. They are good boys and mean to do what is right, but from the sign that old Goodlow has put up, the boys think that there must be some kind of mystery, a gold mine or something like that on his property. I’m afraid that they’ll forget themselves some day and go through the gate or over the gate.”

“ Oh, Son,” pleaded the mother, “ you must not have any of the boys hurt while they are under your charge.”

“ That’s one reason for my visit to you and Father tonight. I want him to tell me what he thinks I should do.”

“ Perhaps you could move the camp a mile away from the gate,” suggested the father.

“ I was thinking of that; but the present location is handy for the truck and wagons. It has water nearby, and the lower mesa cannot be beaten for protection on sunny days.”

“ Yes, you cannot find all the advantages at any other place.”

“ Besides,” continued the young professor,

“the boys would be disappointed, as I have talked to them so often about the wonderful location of the camp, and they liked it from the first. Well, I’ll call them together tomorrow morning and threaten to send anyone home who disregards the orders not to go beyond the gate of Stronghold. But do you really think that man will hurt the boys?”

“Not if I know him well, and I think I understand him. But he’s a great talker. He does a lot of bragging of late. He even boasts that he stole the property from a man who later went to New York.”

“What was the man’s name?” The poem dropped from the trembling hand of the young professor, but in the darkness of the evening the parents could not see that their son was suddenly excited.

“Let me see,” was the slow response of the father. “Merry, Perry, Terry; yes, that’s it or something like it—Terry.”

Just then a younger brother and older sister came out on the porch, where Lloyd Marvane was talking with his parents.

“You’re just in time,” said the brother wishing to change the subject of conversation. “I have become a poet. Listen to what I’ve

written. Let us go into the house, where I'll have a better light."

Seated near a small table Mr. Marvane read his verses.

A THEME OF PRAYER

O, I had thought when I was young,
And climbed the boughs where wild grapes
hung;

Or when in June days o'er the lea,
The call of song-birds came to me;
When flowers softly brushed my face,
Or nature's towers rose in space;
Or when I gazed up at the stars,
And saw the burning red of Mars—
I thought all beauty and its ways
Were only meant for childhood days.

But now that childhood time has flown,
And I must tread the paths, full grown,
I pause to catch the thrilling note
Poured from a songster's summer throat;
I stand in awe, in silence view
Vast nature's domes of every hue;
In flower'd stem, in torrent's might,
In distant stars, in mountain height—
I see God's handiwork everywhere,
And in each work a theme of prayer.

"What a beautiful lyric poem!" cried out Jane Marvane who ran and kissed her brother.

"How do you know it's a lyric poem?" asked the brother.

"Why, do you think we have no schools and no literature in South Dakota? In our normal school I minored in literature, and lyric poetry was one of our subjects."

"So you like my verses."

"I'm proud of my brother. I thought you did nothing but say your prayers. Of course that is good; but I didn't know you would attempt writing poetry."

"Not poetry. I prefer to call it verse making."

"Call it what you will. I rather like the verse and the sentiment."

During the hour that followed Lloyd Marvane explained to the family the long years of study that would be required of him in preparation for his work as a Jesuit professor. When the time came for him to return to the camp, he called his father aside and repeated what had happened when young Terry was found by George Goodlow.

"Father," said he, "Mr. Goodlow boasted that he had stolen the property from a fellow

named Terry. Vincent Terry couldn't sleep the night after he was brought back to the camp. He thinks that the property belonged to his grandfather. His own father still holds the deed. Vincent wants to write home and let his father know what has happened."

"A serious matter, my son, a very serious matter. I said that the man would hurt no one; but if this gets out, there may be danger for the boys. Did young Terry mention the matter to anyone?"

"Only to myself and his brother."

"Give me a little time to think it all over," said the father.

He accompanied his son across the mesa within sight of the camp, where they parted. Late into the night Chester Marvane sat thinking of the information which Lloyd had brought. He could recall some hasty words which he heard from the lips of George Goodlow. Those words were at the time unintelligible, but now in the light of the evening's conversation the words of Goodlow had a new meaning.

CHAPTER X

THE RODEO

THE idea originated in tent number seven with Bev McAnany the leader. He had seen a rodeo at Cheyenne, Wyoming, and concluded that bareback riding and other feats of horsemanship were not difficult accomplishments. Mr. Marvane could have told him of his mistake, for the boys had made but little progress in handling horses. Endurance they had shown, but as for any skill in riding, there was not a promising subject in the camp.

Mr. Marvane was so amused at the request of the boys to give a rodeo that he at once granted permission, thinking that the matter would fall through, once the boys attempted any practice. But the occupants of tent number seven had in view a performance different from anything which had ever entered the head of the young professor.

Ten miles from the camp was a little village of a hundred souls known as Centerville. At

Centerville would be held the first rodeo of the Bad Lands.

Using old boxes on which to paint their announcements, the boys set to work to bring to the attention of the village that a rodeo would be held on August 7th. Bareback riding, riding three horses abreast, snake charming, bucking broncoes, wonderful shooting, and lassoing wild cattle were the principal attractions. But the strangest announcement of all was at the end and read: ADMISSION TEN CENTS. PAY WHEN YOU LEAVE AND IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE PERFORMANCE DON'T PAY ANYTHING.

Only a few rough signs were posted in and near the village, but the news scattered far and wide. It was rumored that a real circus was making its way through the Bad Lands to entertain the President and that it would give an exhibition at Centerville. Men and women grew interested, and children cried until their parents hitched up the family wagon and started for the little town.

When the boys arrived at the village a day in advance, they found to their astonishment as many as twenty families camping in the neighborhood.

In the meanwhile the practice had proved

a miserable failure. Not a boy in the camp could ride a horse unless he had his feet stuck into the stirrups, and no one could use a lasso. Not even a puff snake was captured for the snake charmer.

Mr. Marvane had been so amused at the failure of the boys to get ready for their performance that he had enjoyed the joke, but when on arriving at the village he was questioned about the program he realized that the joke had gone too far. Since there was no charge and the people had come for the performance, he allowed the preparations to go on.

There was a certain air of mystery about the boys' camp, and the people believed that something wonderful awaited them.

Dismay spread among the boys when early in the morning George Goodlow came with his family. He was the one individual in the vicinity whom the lads really feared; moreover, he had watched them practice and knew that they could not carry out their program.

There were no seats, and the audience did not expect them; but a long rope had been stretched in an oval shape to mark off the place for the performers.

Louis Simon had been chosen ring master.

Promptly at two o'clock he stepped into the arena and announced with a loud voice:

“Ladies and Gentlemen: you are about to witness the greatest rodeo and circus on earth. We are on our way to entertain the President of the United States and have passed through your wonderful Bad Lands. Believe me, they are pretty bad, but that doesn't matter, we shall give you the circus, that is, the rodeo all the same. In this circus, that is, rodeo, we have a combination of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey. You know that Barnum said a sucker was born every minute. We have also the famous — the famous — floating Cell Brothers. I am sorry to inform you that some of the animals have floated away, for instance there was the big snake. That snake ate three mules for breakfast and cost us at least fifty thousand dollars. We offer that amount for its capture. If you find a whole herd of sheep gone, just put it down to that snake. We advise you to keep your children home for a few days until that snake is captured.”

There was a murmur through the crowd, but the talking was subdued as the ring master went on with his explanation.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, I am sorry not only for the loss of that monster snake, but also for another disappointment. The entire collection of animals got lost in the Bad Lands, and the wagon drivers have taken another rout to the President’s lodge. The children who have come so far to see the animals will be disappointed, but I am glad to say that our famous riders are here with us and will give one of the most wonderful performances ever seen in South Dakota.”

While the ring master was talking Bill Roberts and Gilbert Murphy, dressed as clowns, crept up behind him and hit him over the head with green gourds. He fell to the ground as if dead and was carried to the ropes by the clowns.

The people clapped and shouted, and the two clowns came out and made a profound bow.

Still shaking the gourd seed from his head, the ring master announced the first performance — Leo Lux, the most wonderful rider in the world.

A horse was led out by one of the clowns, and Leo made his appearance and bowed.

Four boys endeavored to lift him up on his

horse, but he fell over on the other side. Finally he sat upon his bareback animal and slowly rode around the space between the ropes.

A man from the crowd yelled out that his five-year-old boy could ride much better.

It was then announced that Richard Cantillon of Chicago would ride three horses at the same time. The two clowns, the ring master, and half a dozen boys tried in vain to hold the three horses in a row. Young Cantillon fell over them, under them, and between them, not without some risk; then he bowed and went back to the ropes.

It was then announced that James Czarnicki and Harry Jacobberger, the world's most famous lassoists would give an exhibition. The people were warned about the danger of long-horned cattle from the ranches of Texas, and several mothers with their children climbed into wagons for protection against the furious beasts.

After some delay the clowns rushed into the arena and informed the crowd that the wild cattle had escaped, and offered a rich reward of five hundred dollars for their capture.

The Lux Brothers were then announced,

only to be followed by the disappointing news that they had both gone forth to capture the terrible snake.

While all the foolishness was going on, old man Goodlow was growing angry. But some one assured him that this was only a little nonsense to amuse the crowd before the real program began.

Mr. Marvane saw that the matter was getting serious and feared trouble. Calling the boys together he explained matters.

"Boys," he said, "we have carried this joke too far. The people are getting indignant. Mount your horses and ride around the ropes single file behind Tom Higgins, and when he sets spurs to his horse follow him as fast as you can ride. I'll stay behind and try to pacify the crowd and save our equipment."

The ring master then announced a grand parade, and each boy rode around after the leader. Then there was a sound of a whistle, and away went the boys leaving the astonished people wondering at what had happened, and in their midst Mr. Marvane to explain to the crowd that it was all a joke.

Among the first to hurry from the grounds

was George Goodlow. It was evident that he was very angry at the deception.

Near the arena were three buckets of lemonade which the boys had prepared for their afternoon lunch. Mr. Marvane invited the children and treated them with the lemonade and cookies. This act of thoughtfulness appeased the wrath of the parents, and all drove away laughing at the hoax.

Late that afternoon the professor overtook the boys; and now there was another joke, for there were no provisions for supper and nothing to drink, not even a cup of water. Tired and exhausted the boys wrapped themselves in their blankets and slept through the night.

CHAPTER XI

CARRYING THE WHITE FLAG

MORE than a week had passed since the disaster at Centerville. Mr. Marvane was anxious to meet George Goodlow and explain how permission had been given to hold the fake rodeo, but the owner of the mesa did not visit his sheep ranch for several days.

In the meanwhile the Terry brothers had written to their father about George Goodlow and the real owner of the property, and had asked advice for methods of securing more information.

Those were not idle days in the camp, for all were busy preparing for the parade in honor of the President, in which the boys were to be dressed as Ogalala Sioux Indians.

One morning Mr. Marvane called the two Terrys to his tent to have them arrange with Goodlow about the porcupine hunt.

"Boys," said he, "I have been told that Mr. Goodlow went to his ranch about an hour ago. I want you two to interview him about the

porcupine hunt, and at the same time you can find out whether he is angry about the fake rodeo. If while talking to him you can get any information about the real ownership of the property, so much the better. I want you to carry a white flag. This will please the old man. You can tell him that I sent you."

Half an hour later every member of the camp was standing near the gate of Stronghold.

"Goodbye," cried out Henry Miller who of late had become a fast friend of the older Terry.

"Farewell," moaned Sherman Egan.

"Watch out for Old Whiskers," came the warning of several boys.

"Don't let the porcupines stick you," was the advice of Thomas Naughtin.

The two boys climbed the forbidden fence, and waving their flag at the crowd struck out bolding across the mesa.

"Jimminy crickets, look at the gnats!" cried out Vincent, when the two boys had gone half a mile into the ranch. "And there's not one on you! Can you beat it? Why, there they are on the flag!"

Vincent Terry was in a veritable cloud of

the little pests. They were in his eyes, his ears, his nose, and mouth. He could scarcely breathe or see.

"Say, give me that flag," he cried out to his brother.

"You won't get this flag," was the answer.

"Well, give me a part of it."

"Not on your life; use your hat."

Acting on the suggestion Vincent put his hat on the tip of his finger and, raising it as high as he could reach, was surprised to find every gnat follow his hat.

"This beats anything I've seen in South Dakota," he cried out, and stooping he picked up a branch of a sage bush, and raised his hat still higher above his head.

The gnats followed the hat, leaving the boy untouched.

Bearing aloft the strange devices of a hat and a white flag, the two brothers worked their way across the mesa.

"What's that thing bobbing up and down?" asked Valentine in a whisper as the two approached a low cabin.

"Looks like a man."

"But what's he doing?"

"Taking his morning gymnastic exercise."

"Honest, Vin, what's the guy doing?"

The boys came nearer.

"He's fixing the roof of his house," explained Vincent.

"Of course he's working on the roof, a blind man could see that; but what's he got on? what's he wearing? Oh, I see," said the boy, answering his own question, "he has a device for fooling the gnats. He's stolen our invention."

"Or we stole his."

"Guess you're right, and he has out a new patent."

It was a novel sight, for the man had thrust a pole or stick down his back, leaving it to extend out about three feet, and on top of it was an old hat. As the man worked on the roof of his cabin, the stick and hat swung to and fro with the regularity of a pendulum; and at each move the cloud of gnats followed the hat, with not a single insect to molest the laborer.

"It's Old Whiskers," said Vincent in an undertone.

"Of course, who else could it be?"

"Father Bowman said the hired man had whiskers and looked like Mr. Goodlow."

"I believe you are right. Mr. Goodlow is taller. Now I am sure it's the hired man."

"So much the better. He'll tell us something about the property."

In silence the two boys approached the hut, but later they acknowledged that their hearts were beating with unusual rapidity.

"Good morning, sir," began Valentine.

"Mor'n," replied the man, glancing down at the coming visitors.

"Is Mr. Goodlow at home?"

"He ain't here."

"Isn't this his house?"

"No, I'm the only critter in the state who'd live in such a doggone place. His home is up the mesa, but he and his family lives there only a week or so in the summer. He ain't here."

"We thought we saw him coming in this morning," said Vincent.

"He's only here five minutes. Went out on the ranch and won't be back. But what's that white rag you got? A hat's better to keep off those darn little eye-fellows and nose-fellows."

"Why, that's our flag of truce. We've come to ask Mr. Goodlow's permission to hunt

porcupines. He told our director that the porcupines were killing his young poplar trees, and that he'd like to get rid of 'em. We brought the white flag to show that we were on a mission of peace."

"I don't ixactly cetch you. But if you boys think old George Goodlow'd kill a mosquiter, you're mistaken."

"Don't you think he'd hurt us?"

"Naw! not a bit of it. He just talks and scares people, that's all."

Valentine tossed the man a cigar.

"Thanks, youngster, but I'd much radder have a plug of tabaccer."

Then followed a long conversation. The man's name was Cabel White. He was ill-kept and uncouth; knew all about sheep herding, but nothing of the title of the property. Evidently the owner did not think enough of his hired man to communicate any information to him.

While disappointed in getting the man to talk about the property, the boys did enjoy his account of the plague of gnats which came each year, of the long winter months, of the drifting snows, of the sudden storms, and of the care which the herdsman had of his sheep;

for the man had charge of three separate flocks, numbering as many as six hundred in each.

As no information about the title to the property could be obtained, the two boys started for camp.

"Stung," said Valentine when they were a short distance away.

"Not exactly," said Vincent. "You know that Dad says that evidence must be worked up slowly, and that one part consists in negative work, that is, you find out the useless clues and set them aside. We at least know this much; old man Goodlow doesn't communicate his secrets to his hired man."

"I wonder whether we're on a wild goose chase?" asked the older brother.

"Not on your life, Val! Not on your life! That man stole the property from a man named Terry. We should not leave this place until we find out who this man Terry was."

"I'm glad we sent the letter to Dad."

"You're right, we may ditch the whole thing."

"It couldn't do any harm to let Dad know what we have learned," claimed Valentine.

"Because we are sons of a detective and police

sergeant, it doesn't follow that we can trace down a case."

As the brothers neared the camp all seemed in commotion. The boys were togged out in Indian costumes and giving Indian war whoops.

"What can it all mean?" asked Vincent.

"Some more foolishness, like you boys pulled off the other night."

"Yes, but it wasn't all foolishness; it led to my getting over the fence and learning about the property."

"I'll bet I know," said Valentine. "The boys are getting ready for the parade for the President.

"You are right."

"And I have been promised to be allowed to lead the parade," were the happy words of Valentine.

At the gate several boys were waiting to inform the two brothers that the entire camp would set out within an hour. It would take them two days to reach the place where the parade was to be held.

CHAPTER XII

THE BRASS LETTERS

SERGEANT Sarsfield Daly vowed that he would resign from his position at set of sun. He could handle the traffic in the most crowded streets of New York, and he could keep the stream of humanity in motion in front of the White House, but he was a failure in managing the parade for the President in South Dakota.

This failure was only the climax of many days of vexation. Along the highway in front of the President's summer home, automobiles had been passing for days and days. The visitors had asked every imaginable question. Some had insisted that they had a right to make a personal call on the President. Those who come to Washington understand the restrictions around the White House, but those who drove hundreds of miles to South Dakota, in the summer of 1927, seemed to imagine that the President of the United States was waiting on the front porch to welcome them. Why

did he come all the way west, unless to meet his friends and admirers?

Then, there were the foolish questions that the tourists asked. How far was it to Denver, or Salt Lake City, or San Francisco, or Los Angeles? Was Yellowstone Park very large? Was it larger than Central Park in the heart of New York City? Were there real live bears in the park, and were they dangerous? Could a party drive from South Dakota to Yellowstone Park, see all the sights, and return to Chicago in one afternoon? Was the President enjoying good health? Did he like the West? Would there be any chance of seeing him, or of shaking hands with him? Did he like to fish, and did he really catch a large fish, or did Mrs. Coolidge catch it? Such were the questions which Sergeant Daly was supposed to answer.

On the morning of the parade, thousands asked how many Indians there would be in the procession? Was there any possibility of a fight; not a sham battle, but a real one in which people would be scalped? How long would the procession be? Would the Indians be dressed in their primitive costumes, just as people saw them in circuses? Where would

be the best place to view the procession? Where could one park his machine? Were there any charges for parking? The questions and answers flew from one to another, until Sergeant Daly, panting and exhausted, vowed that he would resign from the police force.

But worst of all were the Indians. No chief or leader among them seemed to understand an order. Fifty and more officials were busy in a vain effort to bring order out of chaos. While an official was trying to explain to the driver that no one was to stop along a particular road, an industrious squaw was unloading the cooking utensils or the camping outfit. It was Indian day, and the Indian would have his way within ten miles of the President's lodge.

Finally there were the Indian names. For three days had Sergeant Daly labored with the word, Sioux. He called them the Shoe Injuns, the Sux Injuns, the Si-ux Injuns, the Si-ow Injuns. Then he learned to his dismay that the Sioux were divided into different tribes. There were the Yankton Sioux, the Teton Sioux, and the Ogalala Sioux; and horror of horrors! there were subdivisions, such as the Mdewakantonwan and the Ihankton-

wanna Sioux. The closest that the Sergeant could come to the first name was: The-walking-downtown-Sioux, while the second were called Thanks-if-you-want-to-Sioux.

When the procession was finally whipped into a semblance of order, and half of the tribes has passed the President's stand, there was a cloud of dust raised, as a troop of young Indians rushed pell-mell into the road, and the spokesman asked where the Ogalala Sioux were to take their place.

In vain did Sergeant Daly essay to pronounce the name. He called it Oglalula, Ugallawalla, and Wallagluala. Each time he tried, he had a different pronunciation. Finally with a burst of authority, he decided that there was no place for these young Indians on the program.

Then something happened. The sergeant read the letters on the saddle of the leader: New York Police.

Officer Daly closely scrutinized the leader of the Ogalala Sioux Indians.

"Oh, yes, you're Injuns! great Injuns! Walgalula Injuns! The next time you dress up that way, and paint yourselves, don't forget to paint the wrists."

And the sergeant turned back the cuff of Valentine's right hand and exposed his arm. "Yes, you're an Injun! white Injun! Now beat it! beat it! every one of you. This procession is only for Injuns."

But before Valentine or any other of the boys had time to turn his horse, there came from the officer the stern command: halt.

Sergeant Daly's curiosity was aroused, and he would learn more about the saddles. How did the saddles, which were once used by the New York Police, find their way to South Dakota? Even the shining brass letters had an appeal to the officer. And the word New York; the very word seemed to speak to him in a friendly way.

"Where did you get that saddle, youngster?" he asked of the leader.

"We have thirty of 'em."

"And where did you get 'em?"

"From New York."

"But they belonged to the police."

"So does my father. He's on the police force."

"I wonder if I ever knew him."

"His name is Terry, Sergeant Clifford Terry."

“ My heavens! Young man, you don’t say that Sergeant Terry’s your father.”

“ And my brother’s here, too,” replied Valentine.

For a moment the whole scene in South Dakota vanished, and Sergeant Sarsfield Daly was back in New York. The President of the United States was forgotten, the Indians were forgotten, the procession was forgotten; all vanished as dreams, while the eyes of the officer were riveted upon the letters on the saddle.

“ Halt! halt!” he cried out.

Far down the road and up the road bugles sounded, and in a few minutes the ten thousand Indians stood in their tracks or reined up their horses.

Forgetting the immense crowd that awaited his command, the sergeant rode up more closely to the side of Valentine’s horse.

“ Boy,” said he, “ I must see you and your brother. That I must, and don’t you dare leave this place till we have a good talk about old New York. A good talk, mind you. The very sight of those letters and that saddle makes me homesick for the dear old city. Do you hear?”

"I'll tell my brother."

"And you'll see me."

"Yes, sergeant."

"And if you get lost in the crowd, you'll look for me."

"Yes, sir."

"And you'll keep on looking until we find each other."

"Yes, sir."

"Now, don't forget." Then the officer wheeled around and gave orders for the first part of the procession to march, but the part behind him to mark time.

Then he spoke to the leader and those boys who were near. "Keep your shirt sleeves down, and don't let any one see your white arms; and keep your collars up, and don't let them see your white necks. March right on like real Injuns. We'll show the people that the New York police force can march with the best of 'em."

When the front of the procession had moved on, Sergeant Daly cried aloud to those behind him. "This is the place for the Ogalwala, that is the Wugallula Si-ux Injuns. March on, boys, right into this part of the broken

line. I meant you when I cried out the Ogalala, that is the Wugalula Injuns."

Into their place the boys rode bravely, some of them not knowing of the cause of the delay.

On and on went the procession, not in an orderly way, but ragged and broken. But the Indians were pleased, for they had been allowed to pass in review in front of the Great White Father from Washington.

When a number of the chiefs had reached the grand-stand the procession was halted, and the Great White Father spoke to them and promised to do his part and see that justice was given to the Red Man. Then the music started and the procession moved on.

Suddenly there was a war cry:

"O-g-a-l-a-l-a! O-g-a-l-a-l-a! Rah! rah! rah!"

And bravely the boys from Camp Red Cloud rode by.

Several asked whether the youngsters were real Indians, and were informed that only Indians were in the procession.

Others wanted to know where the boys got their football yells; and it was explained that they were from the government schools and had adopted the ways of the American youth.

Far up the line, Sergeant Daly was wait-

ing for the last part of the procession, but he was thinking of New York.

Then he heard some one call out: "Sergeant Daly! Sergeant Daly! two letters for Sergeant Daly!"

"One's from New York, sir, and the other is said to be very important and is to be opened at once." Such were the words of the United States soldier who handed the two letters to the officer.

"I want you to understand that the one from New York must be more important than any other," protested the sergeant, but his remark was unheeded, as the soldier was off in a second.

Sergeant Daly could not resist the desire to open the letter from New York first. To his surprise he read the words:

I start for South Dakota today.
Very important. Don't tell the
boys if you see them.

SERGEANT TERRY.

All excited, Sergeant Daly opened the second letter. It was brought by a special trusty Indian. It read: "Some Peyote Eaters have planned to kill the President. Watch

an Indian with green feathers on his head, and carrying a long bow."

Glancing up the line the officer saw a lone rider dashing towards him. It was an Indian with green feathers in his headgear, and high above his head he was brandishing a long bow.

CHAPTER XIII

BEANS AND BUTTONS

WHEN the early Catholic missionaries began to labor among the Indians in Mexico, shortly after the conquest of the country by the Spaniards, they found many of the natives stupid and almost paralyzed from the effects of drink, or excessive use of poisonous drugs. Long did the missionaries seek for the cause of the evil. This much they soon discovered, that the use of a certain drug was closely connected with superstitious practices; it was a part of a diabolical religion. Finally from some trustworthy converts, the priests learned that the fatal drug was made from the dried, flowering tops of a certain variety of cactus. Even the gathering of the flower was regarded as a religious ceremony.

One of the most serious problems of the missionary was to break the converts of this dreadful practice. They only partly succeeded, for the use of the drug has come down to our time,

and has persisted despite the most rigorous legislation of the government. Long ago the evil found its way into the United States, and did much harm among certain tribes especially along the southern border.

Those Indians who use the drug are called *Peyote Eaters*, a name which came from the Spaniards. The poison is known as the peyote bean, or mascall bean, or mascall button. The succulent cactus which produces the peyote bean is shaped like a turnip, and has a globose head containing several bean-shaped seeds about an inch long and a half inch in thickness. When dried and hardened the bean or fruit is brown, bitter, and nauseating. It is smuggled into this country by traffickers who are paid well for their services.

We must not judge all the Sioux Indians by the few who are addicted to the use of the peyote bean; just as we do not judge our entire country by those among us who are thieves and murderers. Most of the Sioux Indians in South Dakota are Christians; about half of them belong to the Catholic Church. Among the pagans there are some who are addicted to the use of the peyote bean. It is always

eaten at night, and is considered a part of the pagan religion.

Near the little town of Allen, and about forty miles from Holy Rosary Mission, there were a few of the Sioux who had resisted all efforts of the priests to bring them to the knowledge of the true God. There was a sorcerer among them who claimed divine powers, and made use of this deception to sell the poisonous peyote. His Indian name was Fat Dog.

One day it was secretly announced to the pagan Indians that Fat Dog would arrive with a valise well supplied with the peyote beans; and all preparations were made for a great religious festivity.

The sorcerer was a powerful man with a noble bearing, such as would attract the attention of anyone. Early that morning when the train pulled out of Pierre, the Capital of South Dakota, a rather small man entered into conversation with the Indian, and while the Red Man was reticent about the object of his journey, he let fall a few words which convinced the white man that the Indian was a dangerous character.

When the train drew into the little town,

only the Indian sorcerer and the white man alighted.

Two Indians met their friend and drove away in a farm wagon. The white man walked up and down the platform a few times, and then went into the depot.

"I am a stranger here," he began, addressing the agent, "and I am curious to know something about the tall Indian who got off the train with me."

"Better let him alone," was the reply, "he's a Medicine Man. I hear there's to be some kind of ghost dance among the Peyote Eaters tonight. Two telegrams came in last week; but the Indians use a code and no detective has been able to decipher it."

"Would it be dangerous for a white man to attend the meeting?"

"See here, stranger! Are you looking for trouble?"

"Not exactly."

"Well, if you are looking for trouble, you are on the right road. Some years ago a white fellow went out to one of the ghost dances and he never came back. Take my advice and don't go," and the agent turned away.

"It is not all curiosity," said the stranger.
"Could I disguise myself as an Indian?"

"Stranger," replied the agent again facing the man, "you must be what we westerners call a tender-foot. No man who has lived in South Dakota would try to fool the Indians."

"Well, I feel it my duty to see what is going to happen tonight."

There was something so earnest and deliberate in the speaker's manner that the agent became interested.

"Are you a professor looking for something new about the Indians?"

"No, I never taught a class in my life."

"Newspaper man, perhaps? The country is full of 'em since Coolidge honored us with his presence."

"No, never worked on a paper."

"Well, what are you, stranger?"

"I have already explained that I feel it my duty to examine this ghost dance, or whatever you call it."

"Ghost dance is the name; but I can't tell you how it got that name, except it's always in the night and when ghosts 're about."

"I'm not so much interested in the name."

"If you want to know what happens, I can

satisfy your curiosity without your running the risk of getting a poisonous arrow shot into your body."

"I thought that Indians were no longer dangerous, and that poisonous arrows belonged to story books."

"So they do, for the most part. Indians are just as safe as white men. I'd rather trust them than many of the white men in the country; but when the ghost dance is on, the Indians ain't Indians any more; they're devils—real devils. And this Medicine Man, Fat Dog they call him, is the biggest devil of them all."

"You seem to know something about them."

"Lots about 'em. What have I been doing in this part of the country for long on twenty years? Just step into the station for a few minutes, and then I'll tell you about these dances. When I get through you may know enough without risking your life."

The agent glanced at the semaphore and read some signal.

"The tracks are clear for ten miles on either side," he began, "and we're not apt to be disturbed for some time. Sit down, stranger."

The visitor handed the agent a cigar and

the two sat down on a bench, as there were no chairs in the office.

"Yes," went on the agent, "I know a little about these dances. To begin, these ghost dances are about played out. They used to be right often, but the government has been after the fellows that brought the peyote stuff. I don't know why they didn't stop this dance tonight. The dances 've been rather foolish of late, and perhaps the officers didn't think it worth while to interfere. Some times it only makes things worse to try to stop 'em. Back at the time of the Battle of Wounded Knee when the Indians . . . "

"Pardon me, for interrupting you," said the stranger who judged from the man's words that he was preparing to tell a rather long and disconnected story, "Pardon me, but will you just give me the facts about this ghost dance."

"I was coming to it later, but if you want it right now, you can have it."

"I know so little about these affairs, that I would prefer to get an account of a ghost dance."

"I'll tell you, but the dance don't start at the beginning of the meeting."

“Tell me how it starts.”

“Well, sir, this dance is held in an old shed which is lighted by a single lamp. An Indian keeps this lamp all the time and brings it with him to the meeting. All the Indians gather in a circle and sit in silence, while one gives around the peyote beans. Each Indian gets four beans to start with. They eat the beans and then drink water. Then they sing, sing, sing. Did you ever hear Indians sing?”

“No, sir.”

“Well, it ain’t singing. It’s moaning and howling and all that, but they call it singing. I forgot to tell you that there’s fire in the middle of the shed. Now this is what an Indian told me, and he was at one of the dances. You can believe it or not. The bean makes the Indians stupid, and they see all kinds of things. At first a big snake comes out of the fire, then the shed is full of snakes. Snakes come out of the mouths of the Indians, and wind all around ’em. Then the Indians are turned into snakes. A big bat comes out of the ground and with its devil wings covers all the Indians. Then the Indians sing and sing, and there are more and more snakes. More and more beans are eaten, until at last

every Indian is drunk or crazy with the drugs. All fall asleep and lie on the ground all night, and some of 'em until late the next day."

"That's rather interesting," said the stranger. "Do you know what?" he continued, "I'm rather inclined to get in on the dance tonight."

"Well, sir, I've told you all I know, and you're your own boss; but as a friend, I'd advise you not to go."

The semaphore clicked.

"A freight is coming in from the west," said the agent, leaving his visitor and walking out on the platform.

The stranger followed him and stood looking at the gathering clouds overhead.

"I have decided to go to the dance," said he, when the freight train had passed. "Can I hire a horse around here?"

"It's none of my business," was the reply, "but I have a rather good riding nag, and you can have her. But if she's injured I'll expect twenty-one dollars for her. There are lots of horses you can buy for fifteen dollars, but my nag is worth twenty-one."

"Would you care to sell the horse?"

"You can have her for twenty-one dollars."

“ And you say she’s a good traveller? ”

“ I’ll say she is; if you don’t like her after a day, I’ll buy her back.”

“ What about a saddle? ”

“ I’ll sell mine for ten dollars, and throw in the bridle for nothing.”

“ I’ll take the bargain, and now where can I get a lunch? ”

“ Go right across the tracks to that shanty. It’s small, but it’s the only hotel and lunch room we have.”

On looking at the horse the stranger remarked that it would bring a hundred and fifty dollars in New York. The bargain was struck, the lunch secured; and with his valise strapped to the side of the saddle, the stranger rode away in the direction which the agent had pointed out.

CHAPTER XIV

THE STRANGER STARTLES FATHER MANLEY

“**C**HUIGNAKA-SAPA ” or “ Black Gown ” the Indians had called Father Manley when he first came among them. This was the forty-second anniversary of his coming, and the aged missionary was reminiscent. Much had he for which to thank God. Not once in those long years had he grown discouraged. But he recalled a severe winter years before when he drove his team a hundred miles across the prairies, left his horses with a friend and went by train to consult with an archbishop.

While the missionary was away Sister Francis prayed—long and long she prayed for the little Indian children.

For two hours the Father talked with the archbishop. Twice during the conversation the priest broke down in tears, and once his grace bent his head and wept.

It was a sad story which the Father told. Crops had failed and there was no money to support the mission. It seemed necessary to

send the children home, or to turn them over to the Protestant missions, or to the government schools. One of the Franciscan Sisters was sick owing to undernourishment, and Sister Francis, the superior, was fast losing her strength. The long winter months were only half over, and there was no money to buy coal. The Indian children needed shoes and clothing. There was not sufficient covering for their little beds. The food was poor and insufficient. It was here that Father Manley wept, for he had seen Sister Francis give her small allowance of bread and turnips to a child and herself go to rest without a morsel to eat. Then, there were Indian families calling for help. It was all too pitiful — too pitiful! Father Manley did not complain of any hardship or dangers on the mission, but he could not bear the sight of so much suffering.

When he had spoken, the archbishop bent his head in silence. Then slowly rising the prelate went to his book-case and looked over the rows of volumes. Finally he took down a copy of the *Jesuit Relations*, returned to his seat, and read a few extracts to the missionary; read of those terrible sufferings of the early missionaries in Canada, more than two

hundred years before. Then he brought other volumes, and read of Jogues and Brebeuf, Lalemant, of Garnier and Daniel, the missionary martyrs.

Finally the archbishop laid the books upon his desk and spoke in earnest words: "Father Manley, you must not send a single child away. I shall give you a thousand dollars. It may not be much when so many hungry mouths are to be fed, but it is all that I can spare, but I promise you that God's help will not fail. Go, go with my blessing and with my promise, that the hand of God will not be shortened."

Back to his post went the missionary. Help came, and the little Indian children remained at the mission.

Father Manley attributed much of the spiritual and temporal success to the prayers of Sister Francis and the other Franciscan nuns who had charge of the girl's department.

Forty-two years had passed. His beard was white now and his steps not as firm as they had been, but the priest was still at his post.

He knew that the Franciscan Sisters would make a cake for him that day, also that the forty-second anniversary of Sister Francis

would come next week, and that she would knock at his door to ask for the first intension in his Mass.

Forty-two years on the mission! Father Manley looked out of his window and saw four giant wind-mills pumping water and Brother John caring for the young trees. He recalled how for years the trees had resisted all attempts of the Brother to secure a shady retreat near the mission. Further away could be seen the garden with its long rows of vegetables. Strangers came from afar to view this garden with its big cabbages, and beans, and corn, and onions. The system of irrigation was regarded as a marvel of ingenuity. Still further away was the great wheat field, and now on this August day a thresher was whirring, and a stream of yellow grain was pouring into a wagon.

But with all this prosperity, the numbers of Indian children to be fed and clothed had increased more than a hundredfold. There were five hundred children in the mission, and others were clamoring to gain entrance.

It was to arrange for these problems that the Father was to consult with Sister Francis, and Sister Agatha who had charge of the clothes.

As he looked out of the window, the missionary saw the two nuns crossing the yard, and went down to the small reception room to meet them.

After a few words of greeting, the Father and the two nuns knelt and said a prayer, then they arose and the priest opened a note book.

“Have you found place for the eighteen little girls?” he asked.

“We made a whole row in the dormitory,” replied Sister Agatha.

“How is it possible?” asked he. “When I last saw your dormitory I did not find space enough for the little ones to undress.”

“We took away the stools, and they can find room at the foot of the beds.”

“Well, I must leave that to your ingenuity,” said the priest. “Probably they will have more room to move around than they find in their own little cabins. But will there be sufficient ventilation?”

“You can depend on Sister Agatha for that,” replied Sister Francis. “All the windows are partly open, and I’m afraid that some of the little ones will have their ears frozen.”

“Indeed not,” said Sister Agatha, “they

hide away like chickens under the wings of an old hen. Besides," she remarked, "there is scarcely a child suffering from a cold."

"I have often thought how remarkable the health of the children has been for many years," said the priest. "God has certainly helped us to watch over them. "But, Sister Agatha," he continued, "have you sufficient clothing for all these new-comers?"

"I was almost in despair a few days ago, but several large charity boxes have come in, and the older girls have helped me to get everything ready. It was all the work of St. Joseph. I told him that we must have the things for the poor little girls, and in a few days all that I needed came in."

"It is good to have so generous a patron. But what has St. Joseph done for the little boys?"

"He will certainly have to work a real miracle," said Sister Francis. "Why, the shoes we need will frighten you! And clothes, why Father Superior, the little fellows can wear out the elbows of a coat in one week! Really in one week! and the shoes! why it is almost incredible how the soles wear away! Luckily Brother Shoemaker has a dozen boys

who can mend shoes, and sole leather is not so expensive. But we need many other things. Here is a list of the very least things which we really must have."

The two Franciscans smiled as they saw the good missionary frown a little as he read the list. But they knew that he could not refuse them anything on his anniversary, and it had never occurred to the Father that they always came with their accounts on this very day.

Every item was closely scanned, and every article which the Sisters asked for was agreed upon.

It was towards noon when Father Manley and the two nuns completed all the arrangements for the coming school year.

They were about to end the meeting with a prayer when there was a loud knocking on the door, and an Indian boy who had been placed in charge, and instructed not to allow the Father to be disturbed, came rushing in, and announced that a white man insisted on gaining admission.

While the excited boy was talking, the stranger pushed open the door.

"Pardon my intrusion," he said aloud, "but

not a minute is to be lost. Pardon me, Sisters!" as he saw the two nuns slip away to the side of the room, "pardon me, but I must speak with the priest alone."

"We have just finished our work," replied Father Manley.

"It is rude of me to come in this way," was the apology, "but I must see you at once."

As he spoke the two nuns left the room, and the priest was alone with the intruder.

"Father," said he, "I have come to tell you that some Indians have plotted to kill President Coolidge."

CHAPTER XV

FATHER MANLEY HEARS OF THE GHOST DANCE

“MY name is Terry,” began the stranger as the priest closed the door of the little office and motioned to the visitor to take a seat, “Sergeant Clifford Terry of New York City. I have not time to explain why I came to South Dakota, but I wish to inform you that the life of President Coolidge is in danger.”

“From whom?” came the question.

“The Indians,” and the answer showed the impatience of the speaker.

“Do not fear, my good friend; life is safer in South Dakota than in Chicago or New York. We have had but a single murder on the Reservation in five years.”

“But the President is not safe, and I can prove it to you in five minutes.” There was something so earnest in the speaker’s words that the interest of the priest was awakened at once.

"I can give you all the time you wish," was the gentle reply.

"Have you ever heard of the Peyote Eaters, Father?"

"Have I ever heard the call of the coyotes on cold winter nights? Have I heard the winter storms driving over the fields of snow? These things I have often, often heard, but not more often than the weird songs of the Peyote Eaters."

"Then you witnessed the ghost dances and the orgies of these drug fiends."

"Without boasting I think that I can truly say that few white men have witnessed the dances oftener than I have."

"And your life was not in danger?"

"The priest is seldom in danger. Before the battle of Wounded Knee I went alone to plead with the Indians and prevent slaughter. No other white man could have gone where I went."

The stranger took out his watch.

"This is interesting," he replied, "but I tell you, Father, the life of President Coolidge is in danger, and we have less than two hours to give warning."

"I promise not to interrupt you again. Let

me hear your story. I am getting a little deaf." And the Father moved his chair closer to that of the visitor.

"Father, I was fool enough to think that I could attend the ghost-dance and not be discovered. Since you have been present at these dances I can be short in my account. I bought a horse from the station agent and following his directions concealed myself in some bushes about a mile from the place of meeting. When darkness came I crept closer and saw the ceremonies of the dance from the distribution of the beans to the frantic dancing and the loud calls for the death of the White Big Chief. I forgot to mention that I had previously met an Indian on the train and in a conversation judged aright that he intended to stir up trouble. Before leaving the train I concluded from his remarks that he intended to kill President Coolidge and call the Indians to arms to rescue the country from the white men. The station agent told me he was a medicine man. This was the first visit of the White Big Chief to the Reservation. With his death the Indians would have no difficulty in regaining all the land of the country. Of course it was only under the influence the peyote

drug that these threats were openly made and a plan of action agreed on."

"Did the medicine man not speak in his native language?"

"He spoke both, and by the sign language he used I could interpret sufficient to catch his threats. To my surprise there were a few younger Indians at the dance who did not understand their native language, and for their sake the plan was explained to them in English. A young warrior with a green costume and a poisoned arrow has been commissioned to carry out the plan of shooting the President during the parade today. Six rattlesnakes were brought in and their poison pressed into a cup or dish of some kind and into this poison I saw the Indians dip the arrow. When I left, the Indians were stupid with the bean, but the plans had already been agreed on. And in their condition the Indians really believed that they could rise up and kill the President and drive the white man from the country."

"What of yourself?" the priest asked.

"I was slipping away from the dance, when I was met by two Indians and seized and dragged back to the meeting. Several times

was I threatened with death, and believe me, Father, I did not know the danger that I faced. When the entire crowd was stupid with the drug, I managed to cut the ropes from my hands and feet and to escape."

"Probably the Indians on awaking will forget the plan of killing the President; still," added the priest, "we can take no risks in so important a matter."

"I noticed your telephone wires."

"Yes."

"That is more than I can say of some little place about twenty miles from here. It has a post office and filling station, and was supposed to have a telephone, but I tried an hour and could not get connections. Then I decided to ride here as fast I could. I fear that I have killed my horse."

"Not the least danger if it is a South Dakota nag. The animal may need a day to rest, but I rather imagine that you will not lose it. But I have a difficulty about your theory of the Indian who is to shoot the President with a poisoned arrow. The meeting was held at least a hundred miles from the President's lodge. How could the Indian get there in time for the parade?"

"Father, I couldn't tell you everything at once. The medicine man seems to have an abundance of money. The Indian is to take his costume and poisoned arrow and travel by train. He could have reached Rapid City this morning."

In a few seconds Sergeant Terry got in touch with the police headquarters, and the priest listened to the following words.

"I wish to inform the police that the President's life is in danger . . . "

"It doesn't matter who I am. It's sufficient for you to know that an Indian, with a green costume and carrying a bow and arrow, is to attempt to kill the President . . . "

"It doesn't matter who I am. I say it doesn't matter about my name. It is sufficient for you to know that the President's life is in danger . . . "

"It doesn't matter how many fake warnings you have received. This one is not a fake. . . . Wait a minute, please." Turning to Father Manley the visitor said. "I'm talking to one of the police force, but he won't believe me.

"Let me say a word," replied the priest.

"This is Father Manley of the Mission talking . . . "

"Glad I got you, Captain Scott . . . "

"Oh, everything is quiet at the Mission. I suppose things are all excited around the President's lodge. Now listen, Captain. A man was just talking to you about the President's danger . . . "

"Yes, the man is here in my office and listening to me . . . "

"Yes, I know you get all kinds of fake warnings . . . "

"But listen, Captain, did you hear about the meeting of the Peyote Eaters? "

"You must be asleep . . . "

"Yes, but they did hold a meeting . . . "

"Yes, I know you are very busy with the celebration for the President . . . "

"Yes, I know this is the President's first visit, but we don't want it to be his last . . . "

"Yes, I'm sure you don't . . . "

"Now listen, Captain Scott. It will do no harm to take precautions. I can assure you that the Peyote Eaters had a ghost-dance and when under the influence of the drug decided to kill the President. An Indian wearing a

green costume and carrying a bow and arrow
. . . ”

“ Yes, yes, I know that there are many Indians wearing such a costume and with their bows and arrows. But any one of the police should be able to pick out this Indian. There’s sure to be something suspicious about his actions . . . ”

“ Yes . . . ” after a long explanation.

“ Yes . . . yes . . . ”

“ Now, another thing, Captain Scott, since this message has been sent in from our Mission, will you do me the favor of keeping it out of the papers? ”

“ Thank you, thank you, captain . . . ”

“ Yes, come over any day and see us at the Mission . . . ”

As Captain Scott knew Father Manley well and relied on the judgment of the priest he at once set to work to take the necessary precautions.

CHAPTER XVI

BUT THE PARADE WENT ON

ON that eventful morning, when the Sioux Indians were to pass in parade in front of the President of the United States, there was one Indian who caused some suspicion. He seemed to be attached to no section or tribe, but rode aimlessly up and down the rows of men and women.

More than half of the police force was from the East and had no experience in handling such a crowd. Moreover the officers and soldiers had been assured that there would be no disorder, and were cautioned against the enforcement of too strict a discipline.

Little attention was paid to an Indian wearing a green costume and carrying a long bow. Many of the visitors regarded him as a chief, or as holding some official place in the parade.

When, however, orders came from the police headquarters, to arrest any Indian who answered to this description, provided he left

the ranks, and to be extra careful near the review stand, more than a dozen officials rode rapidly up and down the line of the march.

Among the officers who received the official notification, was Sergeant Daly. Scarcely had he read the note when he saw an Indian riding towards him; an Indian, too, bedecked in conspicuous green and holding high above his head a bow and an arrow.

During his few weeks in the West, the sergeant had witnessed the marksmanship of some of the local police, and had concluded that he could hold his own in a contest with his deftness with the use of a revolver. He would shoot the bow and arrow from the hands of the Indian without endangering the life of the man.

He whipped out his automatic and was waiting his opportunity to fire, when the Indian in green suddenly fell from his horse and lay a helpless victim, with a rope around his shoulders and arms.

A local officer, on receiving the warning of the dangerous character of an Indian dressed in green, had followed the suspect, and using a lasso had dragged the man from the his horse; and before the crowd had a chance to rush to

the spot had sunk the point of the arrow deep into the ground.

The Indian under arrest was pushed from the crowd by two officers who came upon the scene.

On and on went the procession, while only a few were aware of the incident.

Even Sergeant Daly admired the skill of the men in handling the case, and the orderly conduct of all those who witnessed the arrest of the suspicious Indian. He slipped his repeater into its holster and turned to direct the line of march.

Not many minutes had passed before he heard the yell:

“O-ga-la-la! O-ga-la-la! Rah! rah! rah!”

Sergeant Daly forgot all about the suspicious Indian and smiled when he recalled that the Irish kids from New York (for he had concluded that the boys were from that city) were playing their parts so well as to deceive the President of the United States.

“The U-wa-la-wa-la-ga-lu-la boys are doing fine,” he remarked to a crowd of spectators.

While the procession with its gay colors and music was passing in front of the review stand, the Indian in green was being questioned by

the police. But so stupid was he from the effects of the peyote bean, that his trial was postponed and he was committed to prison.

"Gentlemen," said the head officer as he dismissed the three men who had brought in the Indian, "I request that nothing be said to the reporters about this incident. This is the wish of the man who sent in the warning."

"Who is the man?" asked one of the men in a tone of surprise.

"The old missionary up at the Mission."

"How did he find out?"

"Search me, but he sent in the warning, and owing to his help you men got your Indian. He asks that nothing be said about the affair, and that we keep it from the papers."

"We'll do that, all right, officer, but I'd like to know how that priest can learn more about the Indians than a whole army of detectives. That gets me."

"Nothing strange about it. He's among the few persons who know the Indian language perfectly and whom the Indians trust. They tell him everything."

"And the old man wants it kept quiet?"

"Yes, it was his request, when he sent in the warning."

“All right, officer, all right; but he is certainly some detective.”

When the three men left the room, the officer called up Father Manley and informed him that the Indian in green had been placed under arrest.

Among the Sioux chiefs no name is held in greater veneration than that of Red Cloud. He was a friend of Sitting Bull, but was braver and more sagacious. Red Cloud saw that his Indians, few in number, could not cope with the white men, and therefore he held to the policy of peace and mediation.

In the middle of the procession which marched in front of the President was carried a large picture of Red Cloud.

It was agreed as a signal that, when this picture of Red Cloud came in front of the review stand, the procession was to halt.

Around the picture were grouped the principal chiefs of the tribe and now with bared heads they listened to a speech by the great White Big Chief from Washington.

For the first time had the great White Chief spoken to them or visited them. Often had he sent them messages and often, alas, had

he sent his soldiers. But now he had come, and would speak to them.

A few of the chiefs had visited Washington and had spoken to the President, but most of them had not seen him, and pictured him as dressed in the gaudiest of colors. What was their surprise to see him in the attire of an ordinary citizen, dressed like their own agent who stood by his side.

For half an hour did the President speak to the Red Men. He acknowledged that the government had made many mistakes in dealing with the Indian, and that dishonest whites had often defrauded them of their lands and supplies. But he promised to give them justice in the future and exhorted them to settle upon their lands and cultivate their crops. Above all he praised their young men for the part they had taken in the Great War, and for their loyalty to the flag and the country.

It was a glorious day for the Sioux Indians, and an eventful day for the boys of Camp Red Cloud.

Ranks were scarcely broken, when the boys crowded about Valentine Terry and wanted to know what the officer said to him.

“Boys,” replied Valentine, “the New York

saddles saved the day. That big officer is from New York and is a friend of my father. He caught onto us right from the start, and was about to arrest the whole bunch of us, when he saw the brass letters of my saddle and asked me where I was from. When he heard that I was from New York he ordered us to fall into line."

There were some protests from the boys from St. Louis, Cleveland, and Chicago; but all were happy to know that they had succeeded in being real Indians, and that even the President of the United States had smiled and tipped his hat when they gave the Ogalala yell.

CHAPTER XVII

RALPH NEEDLES, THE LAWYER

LATE in the afternoon while the boys were riding back to camp and occasionally shouting their Indian cry: "O-ga-la-la! O-ga-la-la! O-ga-la-la" Father Manley and Sergeant Terry were engaged in serious conversation. The former had explained the incidents of his father's life, as far as he could recall them, had shown the faded and torn deeds to a certain piece of property in the Bad Lands, and had repeated the information received from his sons Valentine and Vincent at Camp Red Cloud.

"Now, Father," said the visitor, "I am only asking some very general advice. Have you any lawyer who is trustworthy and who will take up this business at a reasonable fee?"

While the missionary sat thinking, the sergeant went on talking. "I have a loyal and long friend on the police force at the President's summer lodge, a certain Sergeant Daly. But he is a very heavy man, and may not be

able to stand the trip through the Bad Lands. Moreover, I hear from him that he may ask for a leave of absence at any time, as this life in South Dakota does not appeal to him. We would be only too glad to have him back in New York on the police force. He has often regretted that some political influence took him to Washington, even though he holds a post of honor and responsibility . . . ”

“ I think I have the man you want,” interrupted the priest, “ a certain lawyer by the name of Needles. You see, he should be very sharp,” and the priest smiled at his own pun. “ Ralph Needles has his office in Rapid City, and has shown considerable judgment in handling some affairs of real estate for my Indians.”

“ Do you think that this lawyer will come with me to the mesa? ”

“ That I cannot say.”

“ The reason I ask is this. I have not read the laws of South Dakota on the matter, but in the case of real estate very few laws are retroactive beyond fifteen years. If a man holds a piece of property undisputed for fifteen years, it is his, even if the original claims were faulty. There is only one way of my pressing

this matter, and that is to get the present owner to make a statement in the presence of a witness. It is true, as my boys have written, that he boasted about the matter in the presence of my son Vincent. But this the man can deny in court, and since the boy is a minor his testimony may be thrown out."

"Then you want Mr. Needles as a witness of a statement and as a lawyer to handle the case."

"Precisely; I want him to act in both capacities. And now the question arises, will he come with me to the sheep farm of this man Goodlow; for I understand that a portion of the table-land is used for sheep raising."

"Probably he will. He is very fond of hunting and often spends days in the heart of the Bad Lands. It was on one of these hunting expeditions that he got lost and finally found his way to the Mission in an exhausted condition. We cared for him for two weeks and it was owing to these circumstances that we became friends."

"If he will come with me, I think I can work out a plan of action. You see, Father, I have been on the New York police force for many years. While I would not boast of my

work, for I have many a time gone on a fool's errand, I have traced out connections and caught the guilty where others have failed to do so. I believe with my experience that I can trap this man Goodlow."

"They speak of him as a dangerous man," were the gentle words of warning.

"Father, I do not fear any dangerous man when I have the advantage that I will have over this man Goodlow."

"May I ask precisely what you intend to do?"

"Yes, and I was going to ask you the privilege of explaining it to you and seeking your advice."

"It will be interesting to listen to you . . . But they are ringing for me . . . Come and look," continued the priest as he walked to the window.

Sergeant Terry glanced in the direction indicated and saw two Indians, feeble and bowed, walking slowly towards the little reception room of the missionary. One was an old squaw with a long reed in one hand and a rough cane in another. Holding on to the reed was her blind husband whom the devoted wife brought to the Mission twice a week to ask

for provisions. Both had been faithful friends of Father Manley, and he waited on them personally every time they came. Their visits to the Mission from their little cabin more than a mile away were regarded as a part of the life of the missionary. If he was not there when they called, they would patiently wait for hours until his return. From his own hands they received the basket, which besides provisions contained a little tobacco.

From the window above, the visitor caught the words of greeting from the missionary, and saw the smile of joy of the squaw; for the words which the priest used meant "grand-mother." Every aged Indian woman welcomes this salutation of dignity and honor.

When the couple had departed, another Indian came in and asked for a postage stamp. Then another one wished the Father to order a tire for him from a mail-order store. The priest was all patience with the man and pointed out that with the express, the tire would cost more than one at the local store. However, the Indian insisted on buying by mail, for it appealed to him to receive a package by mail or express. Father Manley was strict in things spiritual; in temporalities he

would advise, but would not force his opinion.

Several other matters were attended to, and then the priest joined his visitor.

“Now, I hope that we shall not be disturbed until I have listened to your plans,” he said. “We are the servants of the Indians, but in this service is our strength. We are the disciples of the Master who washed the feet of His disciples and administered to the sick and poor and suffering. But I must not give you a sermon. Let us hear how the detectives in New York work. Let us see whether their ways will find application in South Dakota.”

“Father,” said Sergeant Terry in a voice that trembled with emotion, “Pardon me for saying this in your presence, but I thank God that I have been able to visit this mission and see the work of the priests and Sisters. Yes, Father, you have made yourself the servant of these Indians. It makes me love my holy religion all the more to witness what I have seen here. If I succeed in this business and regain the property, I promise to remember those at the mission; and above all, Father Manley, I want to help the poor old couple, the blind Indian and his wife. I have not much money with me, but even if I fail in my

law project and do not return, at least spend this for the old couple." With these words the visitor put a five-dollar bill in the hands of the priest.

"May I buy them one or two good cigars?" asked Father Digman.

"Certainly, five or ten of them."

"Have they not a right to some little of the good things of life?" the priest went on to plead. "But to business," said he. "Now tell me of your plans."

"It will require only a few minutes." The sergeant lit a cigar and took a seat near the missionary. "It will take only a few minutes. There is something in the psychology of the place when you want to get information. If you can take a murderer to the place of the supposed crime, you have got more of a chance of getting a confession than you would have elsewhere. Now I want to meet this man Goodlow on his own ranch or rather my ranch. I want to talk to him on the very place that is in dispute. I propose to meet your man Needles and explain my plans and get Needles to introduce me as a prospective buyer of sheep. We need not lie about the matter, for if I get

the property, I intend to make an offer for the sheep."

"Suppose that man Goodlow becomes angry and threatens your life?"

"You need not fear, Father, I have met many a man more desperate than Goodlow, at least that is my opinion now. But to continue my plan. I hope to get out to the ranch with this man Needles and look over the sheep. Of course I shall praise the location as wonderful for raising sheep. I expect to spend an hour or more with the man, and if my conclusions are right he, of his own accord, will tell me and my companion how he came in possession of the property. I shall endeavor to make him repeat the statement more than once in the presence of lawyer Needles. Then I intend to watch for my chance to sit down with Goodlow, and to pull out my revolver and put it at a safe distance from the man, and openly accuse him of robbing my father of the property. What action I shall take later, will depend on circumstances."

Father Manley put forward some difficulties, but Sergeant Terry was ready with an answer. Moreover, he convinced the priest that there would be no danger of his taking

the life of Goodlow or of the man making any serious opposition.

So cool and calculating was the sergeant that the priest had full confidence in his success.

More Indians called for Father Manley and interrupted his conversation with the sergeant.

Returning to the room after an absence of half an hour the missionary explained that on the following day the Indians would have their yearly "Pig Neck."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE " PIG NECK "

UNTIL late that night, the missionary and the visitor talked, while outside there was the rumble of heavy wagons, the barking of dogs, and the crying of children. Camp fires were lit, and the flicker of dim lanterns looked like glow-worms in the trampled wheat field.

" No word in the Indian language gave us more difficulty than picnic," explained the priest to the sergeant, as the two sat at the window and watched the Indians coming in for the yearly feast and fun. " For weeks and weeks we searched for its equivalent in the Indian language. We consulted the oldest and smartest of the tribe, but we could get no clue to a translation. Finally we agreed that we would have to coin a word, and after much discussion we hit upon — Pig Neck. There had to be something in the word to indicate a feast, and while the Red Men are

not too fond of pork, the word brought to their minds that a feast would be a part of the day's exercises; or two feasts, or even three feasts, if the Mission would supply them. And now the word Pig Neck has been adopted by the Sioux Indians. Just put up the sign along the roads, and you'll have a big attendance. If we dropped the yearly Pig Neck, I'm afraid that the Mission would suffer a great deal. It is a part of the Indians' summer vacation."

"You have certainly drawn a crowd," replied the visitor, who stood looking out at the gathering crowd.

"I am glad that you have consented to stay," were the kind words of the priest. "We can send you to the station late in the afternoon, where you can catch the train to Rapid City, and be there early on the following morning. You will notice one thing," the priest went on to explain, "the Indian is not stupid. He can enjoy fun and games. And I want you to watch the tug of war between the squaws — Mrs. Afraid-of-her-horses is to be pitted against Mrs. Rain-in-the-face."

"I have often heard of such names, and have considered them jokes on the Indians."

“Not at all. They are proud of their names and feel hurt if they are called by any other. It is true that many of the children are known as Browns and Johnsons, or Mary or John, but the old Indians still cling to the names of their ancestors.”

Long into the night did the priest and detective talk. Before he retired, the sergeant was convinced that he was to enjoy an interesting day at the Pig Neck.

Before it was fully daylight, the Indians were out of their tents and preparing for breakfast, for they had been told that the Mission would serve them only dinner and supper.

A platform had been built near the Mission and decorated with green boughs and wild flowers. Before it were a few benches, but most of the Indians preferred to stand or walk around during the exercises.

The school children gave the first part of the program. Although they had been away from the care of the Sisters for two months, and had forgotten much that they had learned, still they sang and danced, and gave pieces of recitation.

The attention which the older Indians gave was a matter of surprise to Sergeant Terry.

The Indians enjoyed jokes and songs, and heartily applauded each child. Were the actors not their own children, and were they not proud that their own could do so well?

With the simple exercises of the children, the morning passed quietly away.

But there was a slight disturbance when a few pagan Indians arrived, accompanied by Fat Dog. The Medicine Man repeatedly yelled out at the top of his voice during the recitals of the young child actors.

In vain did the older Indians and even Father Manley endeavor to quiet him. His loud words seemed to contain some threat that made the children shrink from him.

Twice did Fat Dog draw near Sergeant Terry and glare into his face.

The detective pretended not to notice the insults of the Indian, but he had his hand on his pistol ready to protect himself in case of danger.

In the afternoon some white people came to witness the games and contests. As each party arrived, Fat Dog looked, turned and looked at the men.

The Indian men had contests in racing and jumping, and especially in the use of the bow

and arrow. Even some of the smaller Indian boys picked up their bows, shot nickels from the fence posts, and hit moving marks with wonderful skill and accuracy.

The pony races were not only interesting, but proved that the Indian of the plains had not forgotten the art of bareback riding.

The young girls vied with each other in sack races and potato races. Some of them, too, exhibited the work of the previous year, and although they had received prizes at the end of school, they were again rewarded for their excellence in the use of the needle.

But all day long the visitor had been waiting for the tug-of-war. And now Mrs. Afraid-of-her-horses handed her baby to a friend, and came forth for battle. Equally brave was Mrs. Rain-in-the-face. Each, with four assistants, took her position near the line, picked up the heavy rope and waited for the contest.

No, they did not exactly wait. All in vain did the Indian men in charge of the games try to exhort the two contending sides to await the signal before pulling the rope. Four times was Mrs. Rain-in-the-face taken unprepared and pulled far over the line. But each time

the judges reprimanded the contestants and sought to restore order.

Finally a pistol was fired and the real contest was on. Although Mrs. Afraid-of-her-horses weighed fully two hundred and fifty pounds, she and her associates were slowly forced to yield to the stronger party, and the more systematic work of their adversaries.

Pictures which represent the Indian women as sitting with features stern and immovable, do not do them justice, and on this particular occasion of the tug-of-war, not only was there rivalry, but the winners were cheered. There was a clapping of hands, and cries of victory, and throwing of shawls into the air.

Mrs. Afraid-of-her-horses proved to be a brave loser; she shook hands with the winning team, and went back to her baby with loud laughter.

The prizes given after the contest were of every imaginable variety, and consisted of articles sent to the Mission by numerous friends. The children went home carrying big boxes of candies and cakes, and the older people had many useful objects of apparel.

The crowd had not dispersed when Sergeant

Terry found time to whisper a word to Father Manley about his suspicions of Fat Dog.

"This Indian has always been a nuisance," replied the good man. "Did you hear that devilish yell? and when I say devilish yell, I am using the words intentionally. When I read the gospel of some poor creatures being possessed by an evil spirit, I think of this sorcerer. He is feared even by the Christian Indians and little children shrink from him as they would from a mad dog."

"He must recognize me from our long conversation in the train, and after seeing me when I was held in captivity during the ghost dance," said the sergeant.

"When he is on the Reservation, he comes to most of our gatherings," explained the priest. "He is always noisy, yelling at the top of his voice when all others are quiet. He never takes part in the contests, but after getting something to eat leaves before the games are finished."

"I am glad to learn that he has been here on other occasions," admitted the sergeant. "But, Father," he continued, "did you notice how Fat Dog scrutinized those who came to the picnic? And did you notice that he seemed

more anxious about the arrival of the white people?"

"I must acknowledge that I did not pay particular attention to his actions," replied the priest.

"Had it not been that I met him, and he saw me at the ghost dance, I probably would not have watched him, but under the circumstances I was careful to observe every movement. To be candid with you, Father, I was prepared to defend myself."

Several families came to thank Father Manley for the pleasant day which they had spent. A group of little children knelt to receive the priest's blessing.

Many of the women came from the Sisters' house, carrying bundles of old clothing with which to make rugs and coverlets.

It was late in the afternoon when the last of the wagons left the Mission grounds.

The sergeant prepared to start for his train for Rapid City.

In a short but serious conversation, the priest and visitor reviewed the events connected with Fat Dog and the peyote craze. They had not reported the Indian to the authorities, for although he had brought the

peyote bean to the dance, it was not evident that he had stirred up the trouble which led to the danger to the President's life. They would consider the matter after the return of the sergeant.

Father Manley promised to look after the horse which the sergeant wished to leave at the Mission.

CHAPTER XIX

THE CHAMPION WOLF HUNTER

LATE one afternoon two tired horsemen were riding along a winding road through the most remote part of the Bad Lands; the man who led the way was Ralph Needles, and the one who followed was Sergeant Clifford Terry.

At times they paused near the brink of a deep ravine and gazed down into the irregular and broken cavities. Then they reined their horses before cliffs and watched the swallows sail out from hive-like cities of mud, plastered against the side of the hills. Fantastic forms of ruined cities rose up before them, and on one occasion Sergeant Terry lifted his hat in reverence and compared the misty eminence to the towers of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. His companion acknowledged that he had never been in New York, but he assured the stranger that no cathedral could compare in size to the rocky

dome which was enshrouded in the mist before them.

Far up a valley a coyote was seen to keep the path, always at a safe distance from the riders, and yet not entirely disappearing.

"Do you see that animal?" asked the lawyer.

"Yes, I was watching it. It's a large dog, I suppose."

"No, that's a coyote or prairie wolf. You will notice that we never get within gun-shot. Old hunters tell us that it is the slyest animal known. A fox cannot compare to it in instincts of self preservation. The government has almost despaired of exterminating the beasts. They can hide close to a farm house for months and live on chickens and sheep and small pigs. A coyote seems to know just when it is safe."

While Ralph Needles was still talking, there was heard the report of a gun, and the wolf fell in its tracks.

"That's the end of the wolf and the end of my theory," he remarked as he reined up his horse and glanced around. "The work of some sly Indian," he added.

From the narrow canyon came the figure of a man who stooped and examined his prize.

The wolf lay gasping without a struggle, for it had been shot through the heart. So interested was the hunter that he was unaware of the approach of the two horsemen.

"Great shot!" called out Ralph Needles.

"Quite an accident or good luck," was the reply.

"Why, good afternoon, Father," spoke up Sergeant Terry, who noticed the Roman collar which the hunter wore. "Out getting your supper?"

"Good afternoon, sir; but I have to explain that I am not a priest, although I hope to be one some day. I am a Jesuit Scholastic and have charge of the camp up on the mesa."

"How are my boys—the Terrys?"

"Can this be Sergeant Terry?"

"The same," and the sergeant was off his horse and shaking hands with Mr. Marvane.

"How often have the boys spoken of you!" said the camp director, "and now I have the pleasure of meeting you."

"Yes, and my companion Mr. Ralph Needles."

"Glad to meet you, Mr. Needles," and Mr. Marvane reached up and shook hands with the stranger who had not dismounted.

Then all three turned and looked at the dead wolf.

"Mr. Terry is from New York and has never been west before," said Mr. Needles. "We saw the coyote, and I was explaining to my friend what a sly animal it was. I claimed that hunters had no chance with it, and all that. While I was talking, your gun went off and killed the coyote, and exploded all my theories.

"And all of mine are exploded," acknowledged the hunter. "I have been telling the boys at the camp that no single hunter ever has a chance with the animal. The remarkable thing is that I killed the coyote with a shot-gun and with number-four shot. I was really out looking for a porcupine. It is hard to explain how the old fellow ran right to me. And then a few shots must have gone into the heart, for the coyote dropped dead as soon as I fired."

"The beast must have been very hungry," added the lawyer.

"I really cannot explain it fully," said Mr. Marvane. "I know that hunters on horseback find it easier to get near coyotes, for the beasts do not seem to mind horses. But even

when hunters are riding, they only get in rifle range. I got a shot at this fellow about thirty or forty feet away."

"Whatever may be the explanation," interrupted the lawyer, "you've got your prize. Can we help you carry it to the camp?"

"Yes, we are on our way to visit you," put in the sergeant.

"Now, gentlemen," said Mr. Marvane after a short pause. "I want to have the honor of bringing in this coyote to the camp and showing it to the boys. If all three of us come riding in, the boys will never believe that I killed the animal. Moreover, I know a short cut through a rather steep ravine, and you'll enjoy the ride along the winding road."

"Agreed," replied Mr. Needles, "I want my friend to go over the winding approach to the mesa."

"Very well, then," said Sergeant Terry, "we'll help you to get the wolf or the coyote on your horse, and we'll meet you at the camp within an hour. Pardon me," he continued, "when I come into the camp I'll be wearing a false beard. I want to see whether my boys will recognize me. Valentine, the oldest of the two, is a little slow in detective work, but

Vincent seems to have the real instinct of a detective. I suppose you have your own tent."

"Oh, yes, Mr. Gerdor and myself have a small tent to ourselves."

"Very well, now after I have come in, will you send for Vincent under some pretext and bring him into the place?"

"Certainly, but please say nothing about the fact that you saw me kill the wolf. Later I may need both of you for witnesses."

With the prize thrown over the pommel of his saddle, Mr. Marvane rode up the ravine, while the two men followed the zigzagging way which lead to the top of the mesa.

An hour later Sergeant Terry and Ralph Needles were sitting on camp stools in the tent of the director. In walked Vincent Terry.

He stood at the entrance for a moment and turned to the two men. "Excuse me, sirs," he said, "I was looking for Mr. Marvane who sent for me." Then his eyes all but popped from his head. "Dad! he cried out, "Dad, you old humbug, trying to catch me!" and he leaped up and threw his arms around his father's neck.

"Proud of you, boy, proud of you! You're a detective's son! Proud of you! proud of you!"

"Let me call Val," and Vincent started for the door.

"Not so fast, my boy, shake hands with Mr. Needles. He undertook to show me the way through the Bad Lands."

"Say, Dad, the Bad Lands beat the old Adirondacks. Even Val has given in."

"That's just because the President is out here."

"No, sir. Say, but we fooled the President, and he thought that we were real Indians."

"You are nearly as brown as an Indian," remarked the lawyer.

"All of us are brown and tanned."

"That's what you came to the camp for," added the father.

"But say, Dad, I will go and get Val. Now fix that old beard a little, for you do look like a queer one with that old black thing on. But what will I call you when Val comes in?"

"Let's see! why not introduce me as Mr. Sergeant?"

"That will give Val a clue. I didn't have any help."

"No, my boy, but you have the detective instinct. Val has not developed habits of observation."

"Suppose you call me Mr. Clifford."

"That'll help him out by suggestion. Now look here, Dad, I want him to find out without any help."

"Very well, introduce Mr. Needles, and then simply say I am his friend."

"All right, Dad, all right. Valentine is right out here. He's coming now. Hey, Val! Come over here!" he shouted.

Into the tent walked the elder brother.

"Val," began Vincent, "shake hands with Mr. Needles and—his friend."

The boy shook hands with both of the men. Then there was silence.

"Say, Val," began Vincent, "you'll never make a detective."

"Don't mind my younger brother," was the reply. "Dad is a detective in New York, and this kid thinks that he's a great detective also. Don't mind him."

"Now, look here, Val, I've often told you that you can't see things right before your eyes."

"Vin, this is'nt the way to be talking before two strangers! You've gone bug-house on this detective business. Gentlemen, I ask

your pardon for my brother's talking in this way."

"Well, Val, you do beat anything! Can't you do a little thinking, and can't you see things right in front of your nose?"

"I'm tired of this fooling, Vin, and I am ashamed of you talking this way before strangers. Where is Mr. Marvane?"

"Why, he is out there showing the boys the coyote he killed. Don't you hear'm yelling?"

"That's what all the noise is about. Pardon me, gentlemen, I'll go out and see . . ."

"But, first see your dad," and Sergeant Terry took off the false beard.

At once both boys were in the arms of their father. Valentine admitted that his younger brother was more observant and would probably make a better detective.

While the father was telling the boys about their mother and their little brother and sister, cheer after cheer rang out for the wolf hunter, Mr. Marvane.

"Now, sons," warned the father as he followed them to the door of the tent, "my presence here is to be kept a secret until I have finished the business which brought me from New York. A secret—a real secret."

CHAPTER XX

THE IMPEACHMENT OF LLOYD MARVANE

SHORTLY after the arrival of the two men at the camp, Robert Lux, Billy McEvelley, and Tom Higgins came up to Mr. Marvane and asked to consult with him on an important matter.

“Very well, boys, my time is yours. What can I do for you? Any suggestions to improve things in the camp?”

“We hope you’ll not take it amiss, Mr. Marvane.”

“What’s all this seriousness about? Anyone hurt? Any trouble? Out with it, boys.”

“Well, Mr. Marvane — we — want to ask permission to . . . ” and here Robert Lux the spokesman paused.

“Yes, yes, what is it? I never saw you boys so serious.”

“Well, we—want to—impeach you.”

“Impeach me?”

“Of course it’s just in fun,” added Tom

Higgins. "We want to impeach you for killing the wolf, or rather for pretending to kill it. You see, Mr. Marvane, you've been telling us all vacation that no one could get near one of those animals, and then you bring in a wolf, and say that you got close enough to kill it with a shot gun. So we want to bring you to court. You understand."

"Why of course; I'm ready for a trial any time."

"Thank you, Mr. Marvane, I knew you wouldn't mind, but some the boys thought it would be disrespectful."

"You won't have to appear at the trial, Mr. Marvane," explained young McEvelley; "I'm going to impersonate you."

"Do it your own way. I'll leave it all to the program committee. I shall bring the two visitors to witness the court scene, and see that I get justice."

"All right, Mr. Marvane," replied Robert Lux, "there's going to be lots of fun."

The boys went off to prepare for the court scene, and the young director turned toward the tent which he had assigned to the two men.

"Would you men like to witness a court scene?" he asked as he came into the tent.

“Court scene,” repeated lawyer Needles with evident surprise, “I came out here to get away from courts.”

“This is a mock court,” explained the director. “I am to be impeached this evening—impeached for killing the wolf.”

“Oh, I understand,” was the reply. “I shall certainly enjoy the trial, and if necessary be a witness in your favor.”

“It will all be conducted by the boys,” said Mr. Marvane. “One of them will impersonate me. We’ll see what they can prepare for the evening’s entertainment. You will come, Mr. Terry?” he continued, turning to the man.

“I certainly shall be present.”

Supper over, the two Scholastics, the chaplain, and the two visitors went to the large tent where all the campers were awaiting them.

Perched high upon an improvised seat, and wearing a wig made of an old sweater, sat the judge, Donald Cardy.

Robert Lux was the prosecuting attorney. There were five witnesses, and a jury of twelve.

Judge Cardy arose and explained why the court had been convened. Then he demanded in solemn words that the prisoner be brought into court.

In came two policemen with the prisoner, Billy McEvelley, between them. At one side sat the court recorder and two newspaper correspondents.

"What is your name?" asked the judge of the defendant.

"Lloyd Marvane," was the reply.

"Mr. Marvane, you are accused of the awful crime of prevarication. You will recall that on many occasions you explained to the boys of this camp—that the coyote or prairie wolf was the slyest animal known to hunters, that no hunter in fact could get near enough to kill it except with a high-powered rifle. Then, forgetting your former statements to the boys, you came in this afternoon bringing a wolf which you claimed to have killed with a shot gun and small shot. You further maintained that you had gotten within thirty feet of the animal."

Then other witnesses were summoned, all of whom repeated the assertions of Mr. Marvane about the impossibility of approaching a coyote, and at the same time maintaining that he had done so, and had killed the beast which he brought into camp.

The court reporter shook his head as he

wrote rapidly, and the newspaper correspondents prepared for a lengthy report to the press.

After half an hour of trial, the judge arose and instructed the jury that it was bound in justice to pronounce the sentence of guilt.

At this juncture Mr. Needles stepped forward and asked the privilege of saying a word for the defendant.

The court graciously granted the request.

"Your honor," said Mr. Needles, "in the absence of any lawyer to defend the accused person, I ask the privilege of being named as his attorney."

The court assented.

"Your honor," continued Mr. Needles, "I further request that the dead wolf be brought into the court room."

While two of the boys went to secure the wolf, the lawyer spoken in favor of the accused person. He described how he and his friend were riding up the valley. He repeated the experience of the afternoon and his own words to his friend and companion. He called attention to the position of the hunter when he fired. "Your honor and men of the jury," said he, "I can picture to myself all the circumstances of the killing of the wolf. The

hunter was at the left side of the ravine, as one goes up along the path. He was slightly above the animal when he fired and at an angle of forty-five degrees. Without having examined the body of the wolf, I wish to tell the court that facing the same direction as the wolf, one will find in its left side and just under the shoulder the holes of the shot. Since the wolf dropped dead in its tracks, it must have been shot through the heart, and the shot must have penetrated slightly from above. It was said during the trial that no holes or marks of the shot could be found in the carcass. Your honor and gentlemen of the jury, I have been a hunter for many years, and I wish to make the statement that even when a wolf is shot with a rifle, the hole of the bullet is quickly closed and very hard to find. Often there is little bleeding. It was said by one of the witnesses that the left eye showed decay. The explanation is that a shot hit this eye. Again it was asserted that the tongue was slightly decomposed, and that the animal had been dead for some days. Your honor, this is false. My friend and myself saw the animal killed this afternoon. I am not sure of the explanation, but the tongue of a coyote is very dark,

and after a hurried examination one might conclude that the tongue was partly decayed."

At this juncture of the speech, the dead wolf was brought in. Mr. Needles turned the animal on its side and fingering in among the hair, above the heart, he withdrew his hand and showed traces of blood. "Your honor," said he to the judge, "may I ask you to come and examine the dead wolf? It is exactly as I said, the skin is punctured near the heart." Continuing his examination, the lawyer showed three places where the shot had entered.

The jury were then asked to examine the carcass and see the holes torn by the shot. The left eye was the one that showed an injury, as the lawyer had predicted, and the tongue, although rather dark, upon close examination was found to be in no way decomposed.

The judge resumed his seat and the jurymen returned to their places.

Owing to the interest in the trial, no one had noticed the Indian medicine man, Fat Dog, pull aside the flap of the tent and stand at the entrance with his arms folded.

Ralph Needles in impassionate language pleaded for the defendant. He maintained that he had answered every accusation against

the accused man, and called on the men of the jury to pronounce him innocent of all charges. It was jealousy, he maintained, that had prompted other hunters to injure the good name of Mr. Marvane.

“Gentlemen,” said he, “I wish to summon one witness in favor of the defendant, I wish to introduce the evidence of an eye witness, my friend from New York . . .”

Here the camp director jumped to his feet, and motioned to the speaker not to mention the name of the witness. But his attempt was unobserved, and Mr. Needles called aloud the name of Sergeant Clifford Terry.

A roar of applause went up from the astonished crowd, and all the boys rushed up to shake hands with the sergeant.

In the midst of the excitement, Fat Dog lifted the covering of the door and went into the darkness.

Soon order was restored and the judge and jury were in their places.

With more earnestness Ralph Needles spoke. He took occasion to drive a lesson home to the boys. They should never be hasty in pronouncing a person guilty, never be hasty in forming an opinion or in listening to the

accusing words of others. Often in fun and often in malice, the good name of the innocent suffered. In conclusion he appealed to the men of the jury to send in a decision of not guilty.

When he had ceased speaking, Thomas Sexton, the spokesman of the jury arose and in the name of all declared Mr. Marvane not only innocent, but a great hunter.

“Sergeant Terry, shall we ask the boys not to mention your name?” asked Mr. Marvane.

“Possibly it is better to say nothing about it; then no suspicions will be created.”

CHAPTER XXI

THE SHEEP RANCH

EARLY in the morning after the scene of the mock court, and before the boys had been aroused from their sleep, Sergeant Terry and Ralph Needles passed through the gate of Stronghold, and rode over the mesa towards the sheep pens of George Goodlow. The owner of the ranch was awaiting them on the porch of the log cabin used by the single herder, Cabel White. The sergeant wore no disguise, but was dressed in citizen's clothes.

On seeing the two men the owner walked out to meet them.

"Good morning, gentlemen, welcome to my ranch," were his words of greeting.

"Good morning, Mr. Goodlow, let me introduce my friend, Mr. Clifford, who has come to look over your sheep."

"He will find the finest flock in South Dakota," was the boast of Goodlow.

"That's one reason why I am anxious to

inspect them. I hope to take a large number," replied the sergeant.

"And I hope you meet my price and take half the flock. Had much experience in judging sheep?"

"I would scarcely be out here, did I not understand my business well," was the elusive answer of the sergeant.

"I like to deal with experts," was the reply. "I find so few people who understand the sheep business, so few who can pick out a first class critter. Will you men come in and try a cup of good coffee? My hired man is a good cook, and his coffee beats anything I ever find in the cities when I go to sell my sheep. Come right in! come right in!"

Following the owner of the ranch, the two visitors went into the cabin and took a seat at the rustic table.

With their pipes lit and the coffee cups before them, the conversation about sheep and ranches and prices began at once.

The sergeant proved to be a master in asking questions, and at the same time making few statements. He intimated that he would probably take half the flock, or in all about

nine hundred. It was just possible that he would buy the entire flock.

Mr. Clifford wanted to know the method of getting the sheep to the railroad station.

Ralph Needles winced a little when the sergeant asked this question, for it showed complete ignorance of sheep marketing in the South Dakota.

However, George Goodlow was so interested in the subject of sheep, and so anxious to talk, that he gave a long and interesting account of the only method that has been found workable in transporting a flock of sheep to market. With several men on horseback and a few good dogs, it was possible to drive a thousand sheep across the Bad Lands during the day time. But the danger came at night. The coyotes were sure to scent their prey and wait for the cover of darkness. The sheep instinctively knew the danger of the open country.

It was necessary, then, to carry a temporary fence which consisted of narrow pales woven with heavy wire. The portable fence was divided into sections, which could be rolled up into bundles convenient for one man to lift. With this improvised fence, a corral could be

made for the entire flock in less than half an hour. With the dogs watching through the night, any attack on the part of the coyotes was impossible. But if a fence was not used, the coyotes would stampede the sheep and kill hundreds of them in the darkness of the night.

When the hired man had called George Goodlow out of the cabin to talk about some matter, Ralph Needles warned the sergeant about the nature of the questions he was to ask.

"Say, Mr. Detective," he whispered, "you fell down when you asked the old man about getting the sheep to the train. Any boy in the state knows what he repeated for you. Be careful about your questions."

"That's a fact," acknowledged the sergeant, "I forgot how ignorant I was about sheep raising."

"Let me do the talking for a while, and when he takes us out over the mesa you can start in again."

"Very well, I'll be a good listener."

On the return of the owner, the lawyer went into many details about the price and the security.

George Goodlow insisted that he was to re-

ceive payment in full when the sheep reached the pens at the depot.

The lawyer assured him that the conditions were entirely satisfactory.

After further conversation, the three men mounted their horses, and rode out to view the mesa and see the sheep.

It was a bright and exhilarating morning with a touch of parting summer over the landscape. It had been a prosperous year with George Goodlow, who was elated over the fact of an agent of some rich company making a special visit to his ranch. While the agent had not given the name of the association which he represented, he had promised through his lawyer to pay cash, and cash was all that the owner demanded. Goodlow was in the highest of spirits and talkative, very talkative.

As the horses ambled over the closely cropped grass of the pasture, the owner pointed out the special advantages of his ranch for raising sheep, for the high plateau was protected from any attacks of coyotes or wolves. Then George Goodlow became reminiscent and went back to tell how he had come into possession of the land.

The sergeant moved restlessly in his saddle

when the rancher mentioned the name of Pat Terry.

Ralph Needles wedged his horse between those of the other two men, for he feared that in his anger the sergeant might make some remark that would give a hint to the speaker.

Goodlow openly boasted of his success in getting the deeds of the property changed, and of his intimidating the real owner, Pat Terry, until the latter had left the country. He gave every detail of his bribing the clerk at the county seat, and of his becoming the unchallenged owner of the best sheep ranch in the state.

When the conversation lagged, Ralph Needles plied the man with more questions, and received prompt replies and explanations. All the while Sergeant Clifford Terry rode silently along and listened to the boasting man who had robbed his father.

"Let me put you a question about the way you acquired this property," interrupted the lawyer at one point of the conversation.

"Glad to answer you," was the short reply.

"Suppose I were to represent the family of this man, Pat Terry, do you not think I

could bring you to court and recover the property?"

"No, I hold it now by squatters' rights; no one has claimed it for the last fifteen years, and that makes it mine by law."

"It makes it yours by law, provided you did not testify that you had stolen it from others. You have just confessed to me, and in the presence of this stranger, that the property is not yours. You have confessed that you bribed the clerk of deeds, and that you drove the real owner from the state by threats of violence. I think, Mr. Goodlow, that for your own sake, you talk too much about this matter."

"I've been talking for fifteen years. I've told old man Marvane, and lots of people, lots of 'em, and nothing has come of it."

"But some day you may talk too much; to change the subject, let us come back to the sheep."

The men were now riding in the midst of hundreds of the gentle creatures, which looked with mild eyes at the intruders, and then went on to crop the sweet grass.

Sergeant Terry pushed his horse on in the midst of the flock, and pretended to examine

the sheep closely, but all the time he was planning how to act with the confessed plunderer of his father's fortune. Moreover, he did not wish to say or do anything which would show his ignorance of sheep raising and the values of the markets. When the two men came towards him, he always found an excuse for going on further, and examining and counting other parts of the immense flock. Finally when his plans had been matured he joined the men and remarked quietly that he was entirely satisfied with the investigation. He felt sure that he would take half the flock, and possibly he would secure every sheep on the ranch.

The morning had passed away before the three men returned to the log cabin of the care-taker. Here lunch was served and pipes were again lit.

At this juncture Sergeant Clifford Terry drew some papers from his pocket, and handed one of them to George Goodlow.

CHAPTER XXII

FACE TO FACE AFTER THIRTY YEARS

THE rustic table, around which the three men were seated, was five feet long and four feet wide. At one end sat Ralph Needles, while George Goodlow and Sergeant Clifford Terry faced each other in the middle of the table and were, therefore, about four feet apart.

Goodlow slowly examined the paper which had been passed to him. It required some time before the owner of the ranch grasped the meaning of the official document which he held in his hands. It bore the stamp of the City of New York, and was signed by the chief of police of that city. It certified to the fact that the bearer, Sergeant Clifford Terry, had won second place in the pistol practice of the police force in 1925.

Glancing from the certificate to the table. George Goodlow observed that the man opposite to him held a pistol in his right hand.

The paper fell from his fingers, and he lifted both hands above his head.

"You may put your hands down," were the slow words of the sergeant. "I simply wish to impress upon you the fact that you are dealing with a member of the New York police force, and that I am prepared to defend myself if necessary."

"I didn't make no threats," said Goodlow rather roughly.

"But you may be tempted to do so, when you have heard what I have to say," replied the sergeant. "I have come here to talk with you and have brought this lawyer as a witness and adviser. We are going to make no threats, we are not going to arrest you. But we have something to tell you."

"I don't know what it can all be about?"

"Possibly not, but it will not take long to inform you. In the first place I am not going to use this repeater. I am going to put it aside, and sincerely hope that neither party will resort to violence." With these words Sergeant Terry pushed the pistol to one side.

"I'm a peaceful man," claimed Goodlow. "I used to be a fighter and all that, but I'm a peaceful man."

Slowly the sergeant unfolded some papers and letters and placed them before him; and while he assorted the collection George Goodlow became visibly nervous.

The skillful detective observed the effect that he was exercising over the man who sat just opposite him, and deliberately delayed in putting the papers in the order in which he wished to have them. Then after further delay, which seemed doubly long to Goodlow, Sergeant Terry looked the man in the eyes and began.

"My name is Terry," he said, and then he paused.

"My name is Clifford Terry," another pause.

"My father's name was Patrick Terry . . . In South Dakota thirty years ago he was called Pat Terry . . . He was not a coward, but his wife, my own good mother, God have mercy on her soul . . . " and the speaker bowed his head in prayer, "was not a strong woman, and the Indian wars had wrecked her nerves. To save her life my father hurriedly left Dakota . . . "

At this juncture George Goodlow raised his head as if to speak.

“Do not interrupt me, please. My lawyer and myself will give you every opportunity to state your side of the story . . . I say my father was no coward. Many a time during the Fenian Movement in Ireland, he risked his life for his country. Had he been alone, or had my mother been well Pat Terry would have stayed in Dakota and fought for what was his. As it was, he left the state and sacrificed valuable property which was his. There was a fire in the clerk’s office, there was bribery, and changing of titles and deeds of property, and Pat Terry lost a big ranch in the Bad Lands . . . ”

The sergeant almost choked with indignation as he spoke, then he raised his voice, pointed his finger at the face of the man opposite him, and declared in solemn words: “George Goodlow, you are the man who robbed my father, and I have come from New York to claim this property.”

Goodlow forced a laugh. “Why gentlemen,” he said, “even if what this man says is true, the property is mine by the laws of the State. It is mine by squatters’ rights.”

“They may have been yours by such rights,

but they are no longer so," interrupted Ralph Needles.

"How dare you turn against me?" and the eyes of Goodlow flashed vengeance.

"I am a lawyer, and this man seemed to have a just claim on the law. I warn you to make no threats, George Goodlow."

"I will make threats."

"Was not this to be a peaceful transaction?" asked the sergeant coolly.

"Peaceful! peaceful! when you two gentlemen have come here to rob me of property which has been mine for thirty years," and Goodlow cursed the two men who had entrapped him.

"Profanity will do no good in this case," was the admonition of the sergeant. "If you really own the property, it is yours, but I have come here to contest its ownership, and have brought a lawyer to be my adviser."

"He's a traitor to his own people," asserted Goodlow.

"We can settle that in the court in Rapid City," replied the lawyer calmly.

"There will be no court in Rapid City on this case," affirmed Goodlow.

"Are you willing to relinquish the title

without the process of law?" Needles wanted to know.

"I'll never relinquish it."

"I believe you will," said the lawyer.

"Now remember," broke in the sergeant, "we agreed to go over this matter calmly. You will agree with me, Mr. Goodlow, that I had the drop on you if it came to a fight. I believe that is the way you western people express it. Yes, I had the drop on you. But I am a man of peace. I put my repeater aside, and I am willing to put it almost beyond reach," and with these words he pushed the pistol still further from him. "I am willing to go over this matter quietly. If the property did not belong to my father, God rest his soul, I do not want it. If it did belong to him I intend to make every legal effort to get it from you."

"But there's the squatters' rights."

"It was the squatters' rights, but it is no longer so," explained the lawyer. "Only an hour ago, and in my presence, you boasted that you had stolen this property."

"Only in fun—just boasting and bragging—nothing to it."

"I can bring other parties before whom you made the same statement."

"It's a lie," and the man again grew profane.

"I am not a man who believes that one can gain his cause by using profane language," said the sergeant.

"Most policemen cuss," affirmed Goodlow.

"Some may, and that is none of my business. I do not use profane language, and I would prefer you not to do so while conducting this business.

"Business!" retorted Goodlow. "This ain't business, it's robbery; and you two men have come out here right to my ranch to rob me!"

"We've come to claim what is mine. Will you look at this document?" Sergeant Terry opened up a faded paper and pointed out that it was a survey of a certain ranch in the Bad Lands. The land was the shape of an egg, and was called Stronghold. Then the sergeant unfolded a second paper which proved to be a deed of property to Patrick Terry, the deed, in fact, of the property known as Stronghold.

Both the lawyer and the sergeant spoke to Goodlow calmly, but firmly, and proved that

he had come into possession of the property by fraud. He interrupted them at times and swore at them, but they remained unshaken in their claims.

The anger of Goodlow gradually abated and his head sank to the table. The words of profanity no longer came from his lips. He was a subdued man.

Mr. Needles now explained that his client did not wish to prosecute the man for the evil deeds of so many years past. He was even ready to compromise on the ranch and to accept one half of its present value, for the property had more than doubled in value since Pat Terry left Dakota. Would the defendant settle the matter out of court?

Goodlow asked whether a few days would be given him to consult a lawyer.

The request was readily granted.

As the afternoon wore on, and an agreement in all particulars was nearly reached, suddenly at the entrance of the cabin stood the figure of Fat Dog.

"Goodlow," he said, "I want my money."

"Get away, Fat Dog, get away!" demanded Goodlow.

"I want my money."

"Get away, Fat Dog. I'll see you later."

"I want my money."

"Get out of here."

"I looked for you at the tent last night. I looked at the Pig Neck. I looked everywhere. I want my money."

"Get out, Fat Dog! Not today."

"I won't buy no more peyote beans. I want my money."

"Shut up, Fat Dog, shut up and get away!" and with these words George Goodlow leaped to his feet and rushed at the man. "Shut up," he said.

"I want my money, I won't buy . . . "

But the hand of Goodlow was over the mouth of the Indian. "Shut up, shut up, and get out!"

Fat Dog was dragged from the door. The two men within the cabin could hear the angry words and threats on the part of the white man and the Indian. Then there was a subdued conversation outside the cabin.

Goodlow was seen to give money to the Indian and to warn him not to talk so loud, but to visit him later.

"I want more money," affirmed the Indian.

"Don't talk so loud, I tell you," and Goodlow handed the Indian a second payment.

"I want more. I want more," demanded the Red Man.

"I haven't any more today. Go away, Fat Dog, go away today."

Finally the Indian turned to his horse, mounted it, and rode away. Flushed and angry, George Goodlow came into the cabin and sat down near the two men.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE KEY TO THE GATE OF STRONGHOLD

THE last days at the camp were dragging along monotonously, although the directors made every effort to diversify the programs with games and short excursions. Then it was rumored that the gate of Stronghold would be thrown wide open, and that the long-expected porcupine hunt would be permitted within the sacred precincts of George Goodlow's ranch.

There was silence in the big tent when Mr. Marvane arose one night to announce the particulars of the hunt. He held in his hand several letters, and assured the boys that he had some very interesting information for them. There was a prolonged cheer, followed by an unbroken silence.

Mr. Marvane went back to the first days of the camp and recalled the night of the attack by the Indians, and of Vincent Terry's violation of rules by climbing over the gate of

Stronghold. He assured the boys that George Goodlow had asserted on more than one occasion that he had stolen his ranch from a man Pat Terry. Then the speaker briefly sketched the incidents of the past few weeks—the sending of the information to Sergeant Terry, the arrival of the detective, the close study of the claims by a lawyer named Ralph Needles, the object of the visit of the Sergeant and the lawyer a week previous, the confession of George Goodlow, the settlement of the matter out of court on the basis of half-ownership by Sergeant Terry, and finally the written permission of the latter's lawyer for the boys of Camp Red Cloud to hunt porcupines on the ranch.

As the director of the camp spoke many of the boys regarded his words as only a pleasant way of entertaining them.

Finally the speaker produced a key a full yard in length, made of heavy card-board, and bearing the inscription: **THE KEY TO THE GATE OF STRONGHOLD.**

There was loud cheering when the immense object was held aloft, and all read the words. Many who had doubted, were now convinced that the whole speech of the director was only

a part of the evening's entertainment. But perhaps old man Goodlow had given the boys permission to hunt porcupines on his property, and Mr. Marvane would announce the fact after entertaining the crowd.

"Valentine and Vincent Terry will please come to the speaker's table," cried out the director.

The brothers came forward while the crowd cheered.

"Young man, what is your name?" came the solemn words of the director, as he turned to the older brother.

"Valentine Terry."

"And what is your name?" was asked of the other boy.

"Vincent Terry, the young detective."

Again there was a loud cheer.

"In this solemn session of court," said the director with mock earnestness, "there should be the strictest silence. We are about to confer upon the Terry brothers, as heirs to a fortune, the key to the gate of Stronghold."

"Hear! hear!" cried out the boys.

"Silence, silence," demanded the director. When order had been restored, the director again addressed the assembly.

"Boys," he said, "by these deeds of transfer, issued by the Commonwealth of South Dakota, in the year one thousand nine hundred and twenty-seven, on this eleventh day of August, I am authorized to bestow upon the Terry brothers the title of half the sheep ranch known as Stronghold."

"Hurrah! hurrah! Fake! fake!" came the cries.

"It is a genuine document," cried out the director. "As heirs to the property of Sergeant Clifford Terry, his two sons will come into possession of half of one of the best sheep ranches in the state."

"What about the porcupine hunt?" called out one of the boys.

"I am just coming to that part of the document. I am hereby authorized by Ralph Needles, the lawyer in charge, to permit the boys of this camp to hunt porcupines on the ranch tomorrow."

"Where will old man Goodlow be?" asked some one of the crowd.

"I am glad you asked that question. One thing is certain, he will not be near Stronghold. There is a warrant for his arrest on two charges; the stealing of the property, and the

smuggling in of Mexican beans for sale to the Indians. He cannot be found, but he has left the business of transferring half the property in the hands of a lawyer. From this lawyer I have a second letter giving permission to conduct the hunt."

"Where is that big Indian, named Fat Dog?" a camper wanted to know.

"I can also answer that question. I have learned that he was arrested by a friend of the camp, Sergeant Sarsfield Daly."

"Hurrah for the sergeant! hurrah for Sergeant Daly!" came the cries.

"He will not visit the camp again, as his offence is against the federal law, and no bond will be accepted by the government. He will probably serve from three to five years in a federal penitentiary."

"What will they do with old man Goodlow?"

"That depends on several things. In the first place they will have to catch him. Mr. Needles thinks he has started for Canada. Mr. Terry has promised not to prosecute him for stealing the property since an agreement was reached out of court. The federal government will be rather hard on him for work-

ing with Fat Dog and smuggling in the Mexican beans. I can't think of the name of this bean."

"The peyote bean," came the words from a camper from Omaha.

"Peyote bean, that is it. You know it makes the Indians crazy, and nearly caused the death of the President. It will go hard with Mr. Goodlow, if he is caught, for although he had nothing to do with the Indians' designs to kill the President, he helped to smuggle the bean into the country. He will get the full benefit of the law."

The crowd now gathered around the director. Many of the boys still believed that the whole of Mr. Marvane's speech was simply an invention to entertain them. Argument after argument followed, until the director was forced to call for silence, and to assure the boys that the property would go by law to the Terry brothers."

"Say, Mr. Marvane," interrupted young Hatton, "wouldn't it be a fine thing to open the gate tonight?"

"Tonight! tonight!" came the cries.

"Why tonight, boys?"

"It will be more romantic."

"Forget all this rhetoric stuff," argued one of the crowd.

"It just suits the occasion," claimed Hatton. "It will be romantic to go out with the big key and lanterns, and open the gate in the darkness."

"He's right, Hatton is right," went up numerous voices.

"I think it's a good idea," said the director. "Let us have a vote. All in favor of opening the gate in a romantic way in the darkness of night say: Aye!"

"Aye! aye! aye!" came the unanimous response.

There was a rush from the big tent, and soon the boys came back with lanterns. Some had put on their Indian togs and had begun a dance. Several carried torches which cast weird shadows along the tents.

"Mr. Marvane," said Valentine Terry, "Vin was the fellow to do the detective work. I move that he opens the gate."

"You helped me," said the younger brother.

"Yes, but you did the real detective work."

"It is the wish of Valentine that his younger brother have the honor of opening the gate. All in favor of this say: Aye."

“Aye! aye!” was the loud acclaim.

Carrying the large key, Vincent Terry led the procession to the gate.

“Hats off,” were the orders of Mr. Marvane as the crowd gathered in front of the forbidden entrance.

“Gate of Stronghold,” he began, “gate that has resisted the trained soldiers of the nation, gate that has defended and protected the Red Man, gate that kept the wolves out and the sheep in, gate that long barred the way to this secret place of wonder and delight, gate of Stronghold, gate that rivaled in mystery the strong gates of medieval towers, gate of Stronghold, be thou opened!”

As he spoke the boys were tearing aside the barbed wire entanglements.

Then Vincent Terry went forward and lifted the magic key. As he did so eager hands pulled at the gate, and slowly, slowly the gate of Stronghold was opened.

“Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!” the boys shouted—and listen! The Bad Lands around became alive, wonderfully alive, with human voices. “Hurrah!” came the echo clear and strong.

“Hurrah for Stronghold!” shouted numer-

ous voices in unison and back came the echo in response. Louder they called and the Bad Lands, abyss calling abyss, repeated the words: "Stronghold—hold!"

A thrill went through the very bones of every boy at the mighty sound vibrating through the wonderland.

In the north, and at the end of Cuney Table, a glorious sight appeared — northern lights shooting up into the skies as to illumine the scene.

"See, see the northern lights!" cried out Mr. Marvane.

It was truly a magnificent illumination for the solemn opening of Stronghold.

"I'll say it's romantic," rang out the voice of young Hatton. "Say boys, let's sing 'My Country, 'tis of Thee'."

And the song echoed and re-echoed over the mesa.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE PORCUPINE HUNT IS FORGOTTEN

THE porcupine hunt never came off, but in its place was a wolf hunt, which even old-time hunters called remarkable for its tragic end.

On the morning after the opening of the gate of Stronghold, the boys were aroused from their sleep by the barking of dogs—the neighing of horses, and the loud talk of members of the State Game Reserve. Coming from the tents, they saw Mr. Marvane engaged in conversation with three men, while a pack of huge wolf-dogs was gathered around the gate of Stronghold.

After Mass and breakfast the boys assembled in the big tent to listen to a certain Captain Henry Beseau of the South Dakota Game Reserve.

He was a man of about thirty, had served in the World War and won distinction for acts of bravery. For five years he had been in charge of a band of skillful hunters who had

been employed by the State to rid the country of coyotes and wolves. During the past week, with three men and fifteen powerful wolf-dogs, he had run down and killed ten coyotes and six wolves, and the dogs had killed three dozen young animals. Early that morning they had followed the trail of eight wolves, and had seen the creatures dash through the open gate of Stronghold.

"Captain," interrupted Mr. Marvane. "I will have to take the responsibility of leaving the gate open. I gave the permission to the boys to open the gate. We were so engaged in the ceremony of what one of the boys called a romantic opening, that we forgot the more important matter of closing the gate."

"I am glad that it happened," said the man with a smile, "for it is going to give the boys the greatest wolf hunt they ever had. Perhaps it will be the first and the last for many of them. Don't misunderstand me, boys," continued the captain, as he saw several of the boys push to one side, as if intending to avoid a dangerous hunt, "don't misunderstand me. There will be no danger in this hunt, that is, if every boy here follows instructions, there will be no danger, but a big lot of excitement.

Now sit down and let me give you instructions. You have got to be soldiers, you have got to be real cavalrymen."

Camp stools were seized and the boys moved forward and gathered in a circle around the captain. They had been impressed by his military bearing. His voice was not harsh, but it rang out clear. He spoke like one who knew just what he wanted, and intended to make all others obey orders.

"In the first place," began the officer, "our horses are tired and will need at least two hours rest, and even the dogs won't object to a sleep after that good breakfast which has been given them. I am afraid the dogs will insist on staying at the camp; they never get a breakfast like that from us."

"We'll keep 'em," came a voice from the crowd.

"Not on your life, boys, not on your life." They are the greatest hunters in the State. But before I go further I want to say that the dogs will not hurt you. They are very friendly and soon learn who are our friends. If Laddy, the big fellow, insists on hugging you and pulling you to the ground or grabbing

your coat and tearing it, don't mind him, that's Laddy's way of showing that he likes you."

"All right." "We'll love him." "Let him hug us," came the replies.

"Now listen right through the instructions and don't interrupt me. I can explain this matter in five minutes, and then you are free to ask any questions. A part of our work consists in organizing what we call a 'round-up'. Where wolves or coyotes become dangerous to sheep and young animals, or even to poultry yards, we get all the men we can and form a big circle, say five miles across. Then we drive the wolves towards the center of the circle, and in this way surround them and kill a great many. Some escape. Now, we are going to have a 'round-up' in the ranch you boys left open. We've got the eight wolves cornered. If you follow directions and ride as you should we can get all eight wolves in two hours. Here is the plan. We file into the ranch, and then divide to right and left. Those in the center fall back a little so as to form a pocket. I understand that there are forty boys here. With this number we can keep within striking distance of each other and drive the wolves to the other end of the

ranch. I forgot to add that one of my men has already warned the ranch keeper to put all the sheep behind corrals. You boys will not need guns. Leave the guns to us."

"Mr. Marvane is a crack shot," cried out one of the campers.

"On this occasion we prefer to do the shooting ourselves," continued the captain. "As I was explaining, we'll drive the wolves before us. There is no possible way for them to get around us, and they have not had time to dig in. They are scared and know that they are being pursued; for this reason the eight of them will keep together. When we get them cornered at the far end of the ranch, then the excitement comes. You will see the beasts rise up on their hind legs and look for an opening. Then they make a dash. It is a blind dash and their only hope of escape. In this case they may go over the precipice. My men are trained shots and you need not fear. Keep the places assigned you and watch the sport, and when you go home you can say you witnessed the best wolf hunt ever."

There was a loud cheer from the crowd, and many had difficulties to propose.

For an hour Captain Beseau instructed the

raw recruits. As the horses needed a good rest, the hunt was postponed until the afternoon. In the meanwhile the hunter returned from the ranch accompanied by the keeper who reported that all the sheep were safe within the corrals, and that the wolves had been seen to turn to the left at the entrance to the mesa.

At no time during the weeks at the camp had there been so much excitement among the boys. When at three o'clock in the afternoon Captain Beseau sounded his hunting bugle, the dogs responded with unabating noise. The Indian ponies scented the hunt and became restless; some of them reared and pranced, so that the boys found it difficult to mount them. Other boys leaped to the ground and tightened the girths of their saddles.

When the cavalcade filed through the gate of Stronghold, every rider and every horse was trembling with excitement. Those who were to follow along the edges of the mesa, hurried away to take their places, and when the long file reached from precipice to precipice, every boy could see his nearest companion.

The captain rode up and down the line, and then sounded his bugle for the riders to advance.

In less than half an hour the eight wolves were seen. The animals kept well beyond the range of a rifle, but they dashed from one end of the mesa to another, so that every one of the young hunters got a view of them.

The boys kept a perfect line, and drove the wolves on and on towards the far end of the ranch.

Soon the riders at the end of the line began to close in on the affrighted beasts, which ran to the brink of the precipice and then turned to face the hunters. Twice they reared into the air to find an opening among the horses, only to scurry on to the precipice.

A shot was fired from the captain's rifle and one of the wolves fell in its tracks. The remaining seven turned to the horses, but wheeled in their tracks and dashed toward the precipice, and without pausing, leaped far out into space. Some of the horsemen could see the wolves rolling down and down the steep incline. One of them was caught in a bush, and when it arose was seen to limp.

Laddy and Teddy, the most powerful of the dogs, went over the precipice to do battle with the wolf.

Long and long they fought as they rolled and rolled down the rough incline of the hill.

By this time all the boys had reached the edge of the precipice, and many had dismounted to get a better view of the fight.

Finally the wolf was seen to turn on its side and gasp, and the dogs fell exhausted at its side.

"I wouldn't lose those dogs for a thousand dollars," cried out the captain. "Ropes, boys, ropes."

All of the hunters and several of the boys carried ropes at the pommel of their saddles. Every foot of the long rope was tested, and then Captain Beseau tied it around a spruce tree at the edge of the precipice, and gathering together the other part he gradually let himself down the side of the mesa.

It required strength and skill, but the man was equal to the feat.

The boys saw him bend over the wounded and exhausted dogs. In a few minutes the other hunters caught the signal from their commander, and explained that they were to ride and get him. The circuitous way by which they could reach him was fully ten

miles, through "Devil's Path" and up "The Slide."

The hunt and excitement were now over, and the boys put spurs to their ponies and rode away to the camp. They were a happy crowd. The hunt had not only been of interest, but had rid the mesa of the wolves.

It was after dark when Captain Beseau and his two hunters returned to camp. They went to the little tent assigned them, and the captain retired without saying a word. Laddy was dead.

CHAPTER XXV

CLOSING THE GATE OF STRONGHOLD

NOT only had Captain Beseau lost his best hunting dog, but found his horses and men were tired, and he therefore welcomed an invitation from Mr. Marvane to remain two days at the camp. Delightful days were they for the boys, for the captain entertained them for hours with accounts of his hunting expeditions. In the evenings the boys arranged impromptu programs for the visitors. This unexpected visit and prolonged stay of the game-wardens relieved Mr. Marvane of some anxiety. So interesting had been the life at camp that the director feared the monotony of the last days. With Captain Beseau in their midst every hour was full of excitement.

How would the last night at the camp be spent? What would be the nature of the entertainment? Many consultations were held and many suggestions made, but it was finally decided that there would be a solemn closing of the gate of Stronghold. The exercises were

to be held at night and under the glow of torches, for lanterns and search-lights were to be positively excluded. All regretted that the captain and his men could not stay for the closing ceremonies; but duty required the official to report at Rapid City within a certain time.

In the meanwhile definite information had been received from Sergeant Terry, that the lawyer of George Goodlow had settled for the property out of court, and that the original owner had come into possession of one half of the property. The two lawyers and a banker of Rapid City had agreed upon an estimate of the value of the property. Goodlow was to have the alternative of paying in cash or of deeding over to the sergeant one half of the mesa.

A clause had been introduced into the agreement by which the boys of Red Cloud Camp were to have the privilege of camping at the gate every summer and of hunting porcupines on the mesa.

Before the boys broke camp, it was further learned that the sheep ranch had been valued at forty-two thousand dollars, and that

the Terry estate would therefore receive twenty-one thousand.

"Now for your old Adirondacks! Adirondicks! Sticks on the Adirondicks!" were the taunting words of Vincent, as he and his brother were packing their camping outfit on the afternoon before the departure of the boys.

"Just luck. But, Vin, I'm glad that it all happened."

"Luck?"

"Yes, wasn't it lucky that you climbed over the fence into the mesa?"

"Yes, but it took some detective work to follow up the trail, didn't it?"

"You bet it did, Vin, and I congratulate you. But we won't fight about it. I'm not going to be a detective. One in the family is enough."

"Gee! I thought I'd start a fight."

"No fight today, Vin, I am too happy. I had the time of my life and I'm dead glad we came to South Dakota."

"Will you come next year?"

"Of course I will. Don't we own the place?"

"Half of it."

"And a right to enter the mesa?"

"Certainly. But we didn't get twenty-one thousand dollars out of the deal. Only nineteen."

"How's that?"

"Didn't you hear? Dad had written to Mr. Marvane that he sent Father Manley a check for two thousand."

"Bully for Dad!"

"I hope that the priest does one thing."

"What's that?"

"That he'll divvy up with the Sisters."

"He always does. Leave it to Father Manley."

The bell rang for Benediction. Then came supper and as the darkness settled over the mesa the glowing torches showed that the boys were preparing for the solemn closing of the gate of Stronghold.

At the suggestion of Mr. Marvane, the boys assembled around the gate, mounted on their Indian ponies. Some of the boys wore Indian costumes while others carried long lances and posed as medieval knights.

The privilege of closing the gate was given to Valentine Terry. After speeches were made and the torches were raised on high, the boy from New York placed the big paste-

board in front of the gate and declared in solemn words that the entrance to Stronghold was closed for a year.

The only spectator who was not a member of the camping party was Caleb White. To him the whole of the evening's program was a mystery. The keeper of the sheep longed for the departure of the boys and the quiet of the mesa.

Early on the following morning the camp was astir, and before the sun was high in the heavens the ponies with their youthful riders were following the path that led down from the mesa into the ravines of the Bad Lands.

There was many a word of farewell, and many a wish that the vacation time would soon come again.

After the ponies, and rumbling over the rough road, came the two wagons carrying the camp furniture.

Far down in the valley the cavalcade halted, and every boy lifted his hat and gave a last shout for Red Cloud Camp.

* * *

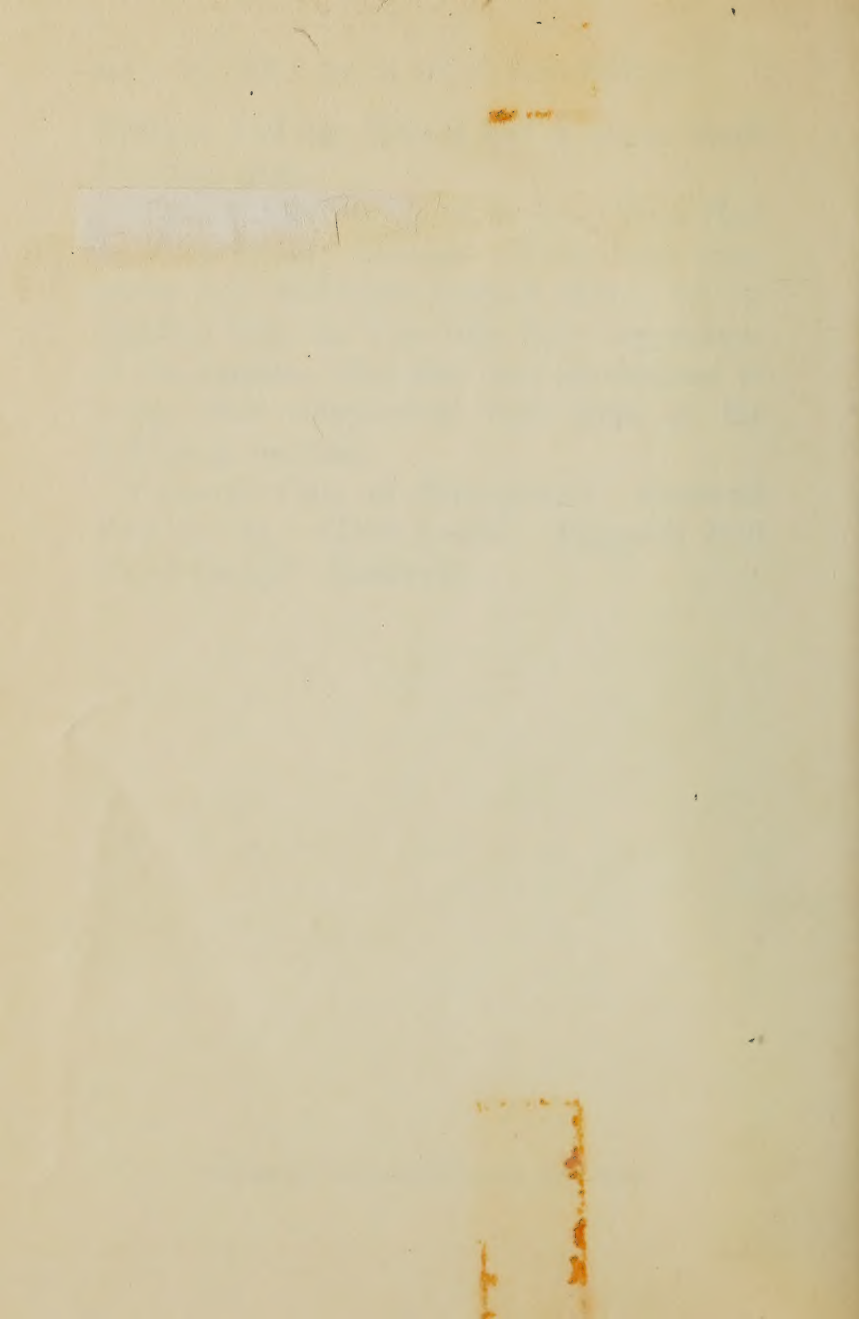
It is not a part of this story to tell the incidents of the return of the campers. Good Father Manley welcomed the boys at the

Mission, and the Sisters had a warm lunch awaiting them.

A quiet week was spent in Red Cloud Hall at Holy Rosary Mission. Notes were compared and addresses marked down, for so satisfied were the boys with their experiences of the summer, that they had determined to bring other companions with them on the following vacation.

Farewell Gate of Stronghold! Farewell Bad Lands! Glad hands! Farewell Red Cloud Camp! Farewell!





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